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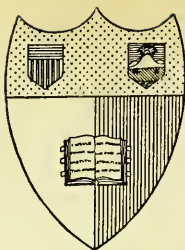
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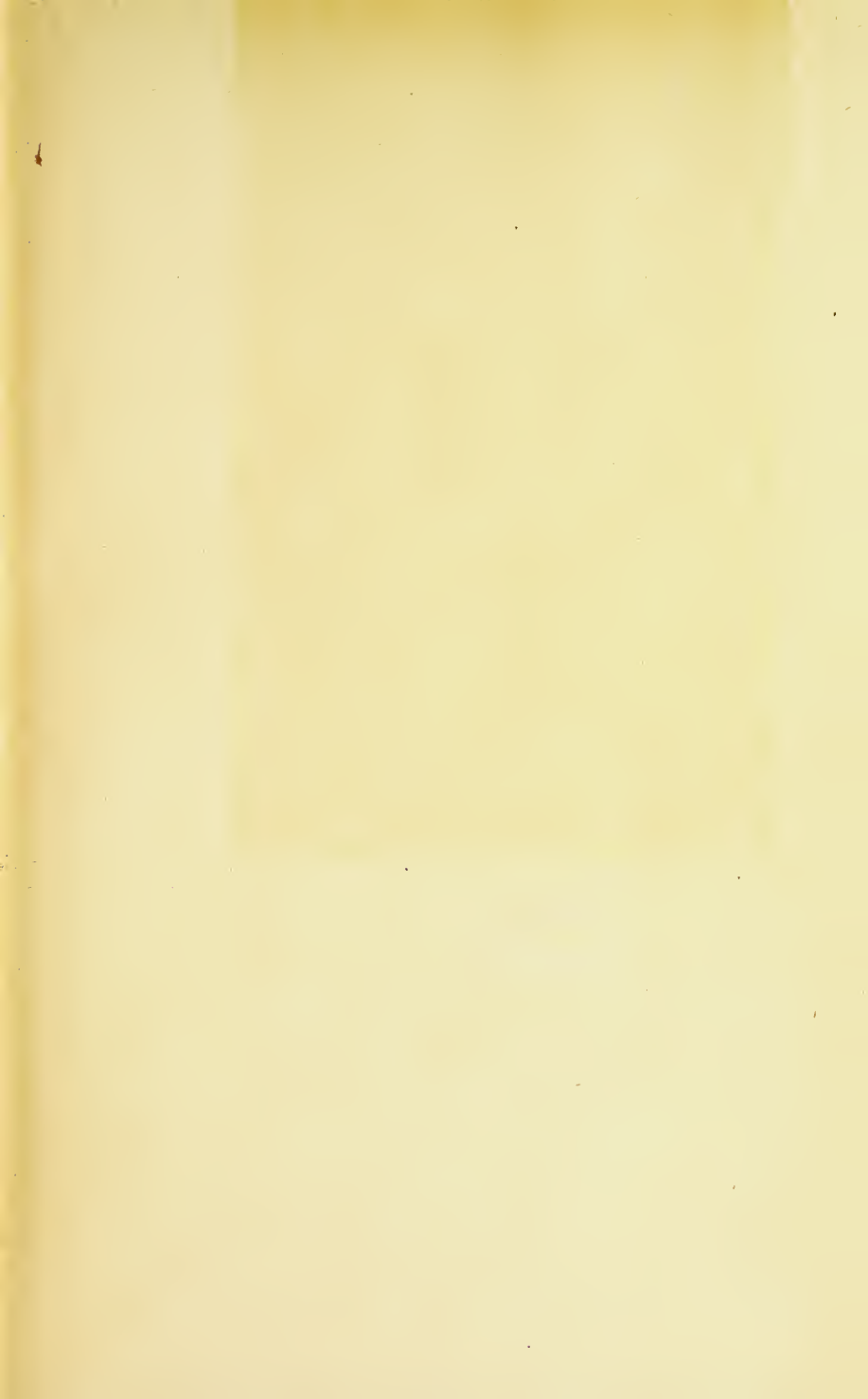
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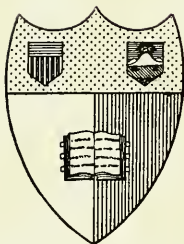
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THE GIFT OF
VICTOR EMANUEL
CLASS OF 1919
1925







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THE GIFT OF
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DE QUINCEY MEMORIALS.

DE QUINCEY MEMORIALS.

*BEING LETTERS AND OTHER RECORDS,
HERE FIRST PUBLISHED.*

WITH
COMMUNICATIONS FROM COLERIDGE, THE WORDSWORTHS,
HANNAH MORE, PROFESSOR WILSON, AND OTHERS.

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND NARRATIVE,

BY
ALEXANDER H. JAPP, LL.D., F.R.S.E.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

NEW YORK:
UNITED STATES BOOK COMPANY.
SUCCESSORS TO
JOHN W. LOVELL COMPANY.

1891.

A. 521.32

P R E F A C E.

MRS. BAIRD SMITH and MISS DE QUINCEY, who entrusted to me these Letters and Papers relating to the De Quincey family, have also in many ways aided me in the task of arranging and editing them, and to these ladies my most grateful thanks are due. I trust that I have not failed in clearing up any obscure or doubtful point in the Letters ; so that the reader, by reference to the explanatory remarks and footnotes, may find his progress pretty straight and easy, and may read with such comprehension as will aid his interest and sympathy. To me, I confess, the work has been a labour of love ; for each of the members of this remarkable family in turn caught my interest and kept it—to such an extent, indeed, that I confess my task became a pleasure ; and not the least of the elements contributing to increase this pleasure was the fact that, even at this late date and after all that has been written on the Opium-Eater, many new side-lights have been cast

on his personality and character by this later "find" of materials. The volume, though on many points it meets the doubts of Mr. Saintsbury (and others), was actually finished some time before his article appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for June 1890, and must not therefore be viewed as having in the remotest way taken origin from that article.

It may be well to explain that when the "Memoir" is referred to, "The Life and Writings of Thomas de Quincey," originally published in 1877, is intended. In a certain letter of Professor Wilson's where *Clark's* "Light of Nature" is mentioned, I had great doubts whether *Tucker's* was not intended, but the writing was certainly more like *Clark's*.

ALEXANDER H. JAPP.

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DE QUINCEY MEMORIALS.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

LIKE the little rills that, half hidden, pour their tiny threads into the larger brooks that are tributary to still greater streams, so family histories, the history of families of intelligence and culture, go to feed the general stream of a country's history. Follow them up, and you are led to the sources of much which were else inexplicable; you find yourself brought face to face with the great events which have shaped the larger destinies of peoples. You can for a moment look through the writers' eyes on the events of the past; find yourself summoned, if you would understand aright, to take the position of a contemporary. Letters written with no idea that they would ever be read by other eyes than those of the friend to whom they were addressed throw the most welcome side-lights on passing events, and brighten up the dark places for us. They do not need to be sublime efforts of the intellect to ensure this result, any more than to emphasise,

on after reflection, the mighty steps that have been taken on the road of progress in many ways since they were penned. We have a double study as we read : the general condition as contrasted with that which exists now, and the characters of those who write in relation to it and to each other.

Even the outer aspect of these letters recalls us to a different world. The old-fashioned, rough-surfaced paper, quarto or folio, written up in most cases to the very edges, and even the outside page on the ends scribbled closely over, occasionally in letters so small as to need good eyesight, leaving only a clear space on which to pen the address when folded, tells of a time when envelopes were not and postage-stamps did not exist, but, instead, over the address, the amount of tax levied by a somewhat exacting Post-Office, which nevertheless indulged the privileged classes in franks, of which most folks were prone to take advantage ; for the postage of a letter was a consideration in those days of mail-coaches, sailing-packets, and many delays and risks, of which now we practically know little or nothing. The franking system has left its marks on some of these letters, too. In many cases the ink has become so dim as to need a good glass and the closest care in deciphering—now and then a letter looks as though it had been actually exposed to sea-water, suggesting, in comparison with others, that the art of the ink-makers had not in all cases reached perfection, or that some of the worthy manufacturers had failed to pay adequate attention to some of the

ingredients that science had even then placed at their command. It is hardly possible that the immense steps made in many directions could be more forcibly brought before the mind than in looking over a collection of letters of the end of last century or the beginning of this.

The De Quincey family certainly did not lack interest in any of the great events of their day; they were keen politicians, great readers, and were each and all of them quick-witted, individual in their views, and apt at communicating themselves. Even in discussing their own narrower family or private interests, there is invariably a touch either of wit or of delicate fun, of banter or of naïve reflection. They came into contact, too, with not a few of the distinguished persons of their day; and their impressions of these persons are often conveyed in the liveliest manner.

And then for the critic and psychologist there is the added interest of studying the relations in which the various members of the family stood to each other; the influence they had upon each other and upon those brought into close relations with them; the mystery of likes and dislikes; and all the problems of inheritance and predisposition operating openly or in more subtle and hidden, but not less effective ways, either for good or ill. The De Quinceys in this respect may claim to have been almost unique. They certainly were not a commonplace family. The Opium-Eater in his own characteristic style has celebrated the remarkable endowments of the two

first-born sisters, who died in childhood, and has told of the wild escapades into which he was led—fights with the factory-boys at Salford and so much else—by his elder and irrepressible brother William, as well as the bold adventures of Richard, the younger one; but his sisters Jane and Mary, if we may judge them from their letters, well deserved some memorial also; and this not only for their own attainments and graces, but for the part they evidently endeavoured, with all honesty and sisterly assiduity, to take to stand as reconciling influences between him and his mother: for she, with her precision and exactitude, her orderly grace and her exacting will; and he, with his erratic propensities and dislike of discipline, were often much at odds with each other, even to the end.

All this the reader will discover from the letters themselves, which are printed exactly as they were written. My business has been confined to the supplying of such links of connection and such notes as were needful to make them intelligible to the reader, without trouble on his part. It is perhaps necessary to say, for clearness' sake, that the De Quincey family, during the period with which we shall mainly be concerned in these letters, consisted of the mother, three sons, and two daughters, as follow:—

1. Mary (who in 1819 married the Rev. Philip Serle,¹ and died in childbed within eighteen months afterwards).

¹ He was a son of that eminent Christian author, Ambrose Serle, a voluminous writer, whose views were entirely in accord with those

2. Thomas.
3. Richard (written of by De Quincey as "My Brother Pink").
4. Jane.
5. Henry (the H. of the "Autobiographic Sketches:" a posthumous child, who belonged to Brazenose College, Oxford, and died in his twenty-sixth year).

Their several characters will more or less clearly come out in their correspondence, though it is much to be regretted that of Richard, whose career, from its restless adventures and the many perils into which he fell, was well worthy of being told in full detail, there is but a poor representation—most of his letters having been lost. The series of letters which he wrote to his sister, and to which De Quincey refers in his Sketch as giving a full and unvarnished account of his varied experiences at sea, as a South-Sea whaler's cabin-boy, as privateer's-man, as pirate's prisoner, as Danish prisoner, as naval midshipman, did not survive the ordeal of circulation to which they were exposed, or at all events did not circulate back into the family repositories, as they ought to have done.

It needs further to be said here that De Quincey's of the Clapham Sect. His works and their various editions make fifty-two entries in the Catalogue of the British Museum. The most important was "The Christian Remembrancer," which ran through many editions—one of which was published in Glasgow, with an Introduction by Dr. Chalmers, thoroughly commendatory of the work, which was dedicated to John Thornton, Esq. It was originally published in 1786. He was not a clergyman, but engaged in the Transport Office. He was born 1741, and died August 1, 1812.

mother was Elizabeth Penson, the daughter of a gentleman who had been at one time an officer in the army, but, during the later period of his life, held some post in the King's Household—on which circumstance and his right thence heraldically derived to the title of "Esquire"—"Armiger," De Quincey in one of his "Autobiographic Sketches"—"The Priory"—takes occasion to be somewhat playful. Two of her brothers went out to India about 1783 as officers in the East India Company's service; and of one of these, Thomas, who lived to a long age, there are many references in De Quincey's autobiographic writings as well as in his Memoir; and we shall find many references to him in these letters.

It is a commonplace to descant on the mothers of great or famous men as having inevitably supplied something of the character, or genius, or energy by which they came to render themselves distinguished. Charles Dickens in one of his Christmas stories funnily formulates it through the mouth of one of his personages:—"All remarkable men have had remarkable mothers, and have respected them in after-life as their best friends;" and Mr. Galton and other devotees of heredity dwell much upon it. But probably in not a few cases imagination plays a part, and traits and habits are magnified or even invented by a too facile posterity, as they look back through the mists of time and tears, to make the theory appear better supported than it really is. At all events, as regards the De Quincey family this

was hardly the case, and the most gifted of all seemed not only to draw little from his mother, but to feel as though he little desired that such should have been the case. Her very graces and virtues, fully acknowledged, would appear to have acted as a kind of irritant with, at times, an indefinable touch of at least passive repulsion. Full justice is done to the stern uprightness and severely dutiful persistency with which she bore herself in all relations of life—with which she bore herself towards her children in the midst of many disappointments, crosses, and failures on their part to meet her prudent and very practical views for them. But she lacked the art at once of attracting and of influencing them. She stood apart, after all; an indefinite gulf fixed between them and her. Identity of ideas and of sentiments even is not an absolute requirement as between parents and children, but a common meeting-point of sympathy is. To enjoy the fullest confidence in each other: to feel that no mere error of judgment, or, better yet, no fatal mistake even as regards practical conduct, can alienate or lessen the affection existing is a *sine quâ non* of family unity and mutual trust and helpfulness. De Quincey's mother laboured hard to make propriety, duty, severe self-denials, do the part of this sympathy and tenderness and confidence, and her efforts were failures.

The irony of her position, as seen in the letters that are to follow, is very painful. Much she gave up, much she endured, much was she prepared to do and to suffer, for the strangely premature and

in some respects perverse children who had been left to her sole care; but she was doomed to go without the reward she sought—the uncalculating affection which is to the parental heart like the dews of Hermon. Her unyielding sense of propriety, of decorum, of formal and rigid regard for set observances, her lack of humour, and her staid self-support, in not a few of their manifestations, would seem from the very earliest years to have excited something approaching to questioning amusement on the part of these precocious youngsters. De Quincey has made many references to her in the course of his “Confessions” and “Autobiographic Sketches,” and these are always touched with a kind of respect; but the affectionate reverence that prescribes tender reserve if not filial blindness and loving exaggeration in certain points are noticeably wanting. He writes of her very much as he would of any other lady he had met of like character, with a quick eye for amusing traits. Here is a portrait of her found among his papers, evidently written at a very late date, though never printed:—

“It may seem odd, according to most people’s ideas of mothers, that some part of my redundant love did not overflow upon mine. And the more so, if the reader happened to know that she was one whom her grown-up friends made the object of idolising reverence. But she delighted not in infancy, nor infancy in her. The very greatness of some qualities in her mind made this impossible. Let me make a sketch of her; for she well merits

it. Figure to yourself a woman of admirable manners, in fact as much as any person I have ever known, distinguished by lady-like tranquillity and repose, and even by self-possession, but also freezing in excess. Austere she was in a degree which fitted her for the lady president of rebellious nunneries. Rigid in her exactions of duty from those around her, but also from herself; upright, sternly conscientious, munificent in her charities, pure-minded in so absolute a degree that you would have been tempted to call her 'holy,'—she yet could not win hearts by the graciousness of her manner. That quality which shone so brightly in my sister, and the expansive love which distinguished both her and myself, we had from our father. And a peculiarity there was about my mother which is not found, or anything like it, in one mother out of five hundred. Usually mothers defend their own cubs, right or wrong; and they also think favourably of any pretensions to praise which these cubs may put forward. Not so my mother. Were we taxed by interested parties with some impropriety of conduct? Trial by jury, English laws of evidence, all were forgotten; and we were found guilty on the bare affidavit of the angry accuser. Did a visitor say some flattering thing of a talent or accomplishment by one or other of us? My mother protested so solemnly against the possibility that we could possess either one or the other, that we children held it a point of filial duty to believe ourselves the very scum and refuse

of the universe. Yet, with all this absence of indulgent thoughts towards us or any of us, no mother can ever have lived who was more vigilant to see that we received to the last fraction every attention due to our health, to the decorum of our manners, or to the proprieties of our dress. It is as good as a comedy in my feeling when I call back the characteristic scene (characteristic equally of the mother and the simple flock that obeyed her summons) which went on every morning of the year. All of us, for some years six, were marched off or carried off to a morning parade in my mother's dressing-room. As the mail-coaches go down daily in London to the inspector of mails, so we rolled out of the nursery at a signal given, and were minutely reviewed in succession. Were the lamps of our equipage clean and bright? Were the springs properly braced? Were the linch-pins secured? When this inspection, which was no mere formality, had travelled from the front rank to the rear, when we were pronounced to be in proper trim, or, in the language of guards, 'All right behind!' we were dismissed, but with two ceremonies that to us were mysterious and allegorical—first, that our hair and faces were sprinkled with lavender-water and milk of roses; secondly, that we received a kiss on the forehead. The mystery in this last instance regarded the place; because we little silly people in the nursery never planted our kisses on foreheads, but sprang right at the lips. That I do not, however, exaggerate the austerity of

my mother's character and the awe which it breathed around her, is certain from what I recollect of the deep impression which she produced upon her servants. Except as regarded the waiting at table, she never communicated with them directly, but only through a housekeeper. Sometimes, however, when a feud arose amongst them, it was remembered that in the last resort an appeal lay to 'mistress.' But rare were the cases in which this final remedy was tried. And as one out of a hundred similar testimonies to this impression, there occurs to me the lively *mot* of a housemaid who, being asked why in a case of supposed wrong she had not spoken to her mistress, replied—'Speak to mistress! Would I speak to a ghost?' "

The prevailing formality of the time has, of course, to be borne in mind. Children then addressed their father and mother as "Honoured Sir" and "Honoured Madam," and it was regarded as very affectionate to write "Dear and honoured Father" or "Dear and honoured Mother." But, after all, this was merely a custom, a matter of manners, in most cases, and did not at all interfere with the spontaneous expressions of affection in circumstances which admitted of them. Mrs. de Quincey was thus an exception in the utter formality which marked her relations with her children, and the children missed something and dwelt upon the want of it, and on the utter coldness and precision of her endearments.

It is very characteristic of De Quincey, and illustrates well the want of that nestling confidence and

complete faith which go for so much as between mother and children, that we find him thus reflecting on his own position during his stay at The Priory after his wanderings in Wales and his trying experiences in London :—

“I knew my mother sufficiently to be assured that, once having expressed her sorrowful condemnation of my act, having made it impossible for me to misunderstand her views, she was ready to extend her wonted hospitality to me, and (as regarded all practical matters) her wonted kindness; but not that sort of kindness which could make me forget that I stood under the deepest shadows of her displeasure, or could leave me for a moment free to converse at my ease upon any and every subject. A man that is talking on simple toleration, and, as it were, under permanent protest, cannot feel himself morally at his ease, unless very obtuse and coarse in his sensibilities.”

In many other places in his “Confessions” and “Autobiographic Sketches” we have further notes of his impressions of his mother, as severe and formal, though duty-loving, and, in her own way, kindly, ready to do much and sacrifice much for her children, yet failing in the spontaneity of impulse and tenderness without which childhood and youth seem to regard themselves as coldly held aloof as by something to be feared, it may be respected, even revered, but hardly loved, or regarded under any circumstances as on a footing of equality and reciprocal affection.

Mrs. Baird Smith, however, is inclined to take a somewhat different view of De Quincey's mother from that of the Opium-Eater himself and his biographers. She holds that the "severity and Roman firmness" grew less and less conspicuous in her life, as she allowed herself more and more to come under the influence of some of those from whom she conceived that she had drawn the stimulus to her religious feelings. But we must allow Mrs. Baird Smith to communicate her own ideas in her own words:—

"I think that Professor Masson, and indeed my father (which is a bold thing to say), mistakes and mistook the trait in his mother's character which came between her and her children. It was not a Roman firmness, but such a diffidence of her own powers as led her too much to the bringing in of outside authority and advice, which the young men especially resented, and which made most of the mischief, though I believe every one of them would have been somewhat of a difficulty to an elderly, anxious-minded woman. If there is one counsel which a mother should bind as a frontlet between her eyes, it is to let no outsider come between her and her children if she wishes to give them the best chance of true, loving, and natural relations with her."

No doubt there is something in this view. De Quincey's mother was too much inclined to listen to Hannah More and Mrs. Pratt and the rest; but there is no severer or more tyrannical personage than the religious dogmatist—originally of a cold

and somewhat overbearing temper—who can fortify herself with the opinion of those who are of one mind with her in more serious matters of belief; and though we ourselves can look from Mrs. Baird Smith's point of view, and accord it due attention and deference, we still think there was in Mrs. de Quincey's character something of severity and retreat from spontaneous expression of any of the softer feelings and sentiments; and that, even if she had not come under the influence of the Hannah More school, she would still have been broadly unresponsive to certain moods and feelings, ungenial and unspontaneous in her ways towards her children in only too many respects.

In the light of these facts, a statement of De Quincey, to the effect that his mother removed him from the Bath Grammar-School, where he was under a teacher whom he revered and loved, Dr. Morgan, a distinguished Etonian, because she had learned that he was in the habit of hearing compliments paid to himself, becomes quite natural, and no mere exaggeration of the boy's own, as to many readers it might have seemed. Such conduct was so very unlike that commonly practised by parents, more especially the mothers of clever children, that we ourselves were inclined to take De Quincey's assertion *cum grano salis* till we had read these letters of his mother and sisters and brothers. It is in them demonstrated to have been only consistent with her character and general disposition towards her children, Love of approbation, so closely linked

with the powers of sympathy and affection in the young, needs, with judicious art, to be fed rather than starved; and in a nature like that of De Quincey, if not also in the natures of "Pink" and Henry, there was special need that it should be so, to avoid stimulating prematurely a refractory and cynical spirit, alien to their deeper nature which craved for sympathy and appreciation; and this was only likely to be the more decisively and speedily effected at any rate in the case of one who was so sensitively self-critical and also so fitted to discriminate his points of superiority on contact with others.

Mrs. de Quincey was an intimate friend of Mrs. Hannah More, and this friendship, and what she regarded as the profitable intercourse implied in it, did something to determine, as we shall see, her choice of one of her residences, Westhay, which was in close neighbourhood to Mrs. More's home—Barley Wood. She was in fullest sympathy with the teachings and efforts of what was then known as the "Clapham Sect" or the "Clapham Saints"—strictly evangelical, yet with almost unexpected touches of liberal sentiment; and with some of the members of that Society she was well acquainted: the little record in one of her letters of a two-days' visit to her of T. B. Macaulay, then a mere child of ten years, and of the impressions made on her by him and his premature ways, is very curious and interesting, not only as indicating the relation in which she stood to some of these notable personages, but as exhibiting anew, and from an unexpected

point, the marvellous memory, power of concentration, and love of books which remained with him to the end, thereby attesting the truth of Wordsworth's axiom, "The child is father of the man."

Elsewhere De Quincey spoke of his mother as an intellectual woman: "For, though unpretending to the name and honours of a literary woman," he says, "I shall presume to call her (what many literary women are not) an *intellectual* woman; and I believe that if ever her letters should be collected and published, they would be thought generally to exhibit as much strong and masculine sense, delivered in as pure 'mother English,' racy and fresh with idiomatic graces, as any in our language—hardly excepting those of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu."

The letters that follow from her pen—all of them that have been preserved—will enable the reader to judge how far her famous son had estimated her intellectual qualities aright: he was not likely to over-praise her on that score from merely filial partiality, as we have seen.

CHAPTER II.

WINKFIELD SCHOOL.

FROM a very early letter of De Quincey's brother Richard ("Pink" of the "Autobiographic Sketches"), we learn a fact of which before we had had no definite knowledge,—that Richard preceded him at Mr. Spencer's school at Winkfield. It was a small school, only twenty or thirty boys; Mr. Spencer being also the Rector of the parish. It is evident that Mr. Spencer and his family found a source of satisfaction and pleasure in the school-work; Miss Spencer doing not a little to forward more "liberal" studies than is often allowed to boys at similar schools, lending books of general literature to the lads and discussing their contents with them. Mrs. de Quincey no doubt had reasons for feeling satisfied with the school, and with "Pink's" life and progress there; but what may well have been an excellent and suitable school for "Pink" may not have had quite the same recommendation for the elder brother, who had made such remarkable progress both at Salford and at the Bath Grammar-School. However, here is the early letter from Richard, which suffices to bring out what we have said:—

“WINKFIELD, April 9th, 1799.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was very sorry to hear of my mother’s illness, and hope you will soon write to let me know how she is. Give my love to Miss Brotherton, as you told me in your letter that she was come to Bath. I hope she will come with my mother and you when you come to see me. I had not heard of the news which you told me of, and hope it is true. Tell my mother I should be much obliged to her if when she comes she would bring me some books of history or arts and sciences; for I have no need of others, as Miss Spencer very often lends me some. I have nothing more to say, and believe me, my dear brother, your ever affectionate brother,

“R. DE QUINCEY.”

N.B.—“Miss Spencer sends her compliments to my mother. I shall expect a letter from you the next post. Vale.”

Mrs. de Quincey had had a long spell of anxiety and care in nursing and attending to Thomas during that illness resulting from the blow to his head received at the Bath Grammar-School, and she herself afterwards fell ill, probably in some measure due to this; and it is to that Richard refers.

Thomas went to Winkfield in the end of summer 1799; and from many letters written to him by his mother whilst there we cull the following, as serving to illustrate both her manner towards the boys and

the feelings of friendship and trustfulness that she entertained towards the Spencer family :—

“GREEN PARK BUILDINGS, *Feb.* 14, 1800.

BATH.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I would not suffer the Miss Spencers to depart without a letter, though they will tell you all you wish to hear about home. The books, I hope, will be agreeable to you. I perceived in two or three places which I just looked at, without cutting the leaves open, that the Scotchman uses some inelegant words ; I trust I shall never hear you say, as he does, that in a difficult argument ‘ people find themselves gravelled.’ I do not know of any new thing. Poor *Ld.* Carbery continues very ill : I am persuaded never likely to recover. They have lodgings in *Milsom Street* for the present ; but probably will remove to the *Hot Wells* ; her Ladyship was here on *Wednesday evening*, and is as handsome and amiable as ever ; but I fear terribly surrounded with *Irish people of rank* who wish to make her racket about like themselves.

“You will hear of the oratorio to-day from those who will have heard it, if their organs of hearing are not frozen in the church before the music begins.

“My dear boy, I will never after this mention the affair of *Bowes*, and perhaps shall never think of it again, but just to remark that you are wrong to blame *Mr. Pratt* about it ; you acknowledge that the appearance of being with *Bowes* was unfavourable, and as long as we are weak creatures, unable to

form certain or intuitive judgments, we must continue to get the help we can in forming our opinions; appearances, unfortunately, are all we have to judge of actions by; and those in the particular action in question were really against you; if therefore Mr. and Mrs. Pratt put a construction upon your intentions which excused you with respect to themselves, surely they did a thing as kind as possible; for they could not think it was right for you to be with Bowes, either with respect to me or for your own sake.

“Mrs. Sandford of Manchester is in Bath with the two Miss Gortons. Colonel Clowes of Broughton is dead, and poor miserable Edward Hall has been running away from his father, meaning, had he had so much sense as to have found the way to Liverpool, to have been a sailor, instead of which he went to Bolton and Rochdale, and found himself at night entering Manchester, which he imagined himself forty miles away from.

“Henry must have shoes of your Bradford man, as we have no measure of him here; indeed the shoes which Norris has made for you and Richard are so little proper for the country and for the season, that, if they are big enough, they had better be in your drawer for three months, and both of you get good strong ones made. Your shirts are preparing, but will be some weeks before they are finished. Adieu, my dearest boy.—Believe me ever most truly your affectionate mother and friend,

E. DE QUINCEY.”

The affair of Bowes was nothing but the most innocent schoolboy trick referred to in the Memoir—a matter of which not one parent out of ten, even the most careful, would ever have taken any notice. The Scotchman referred to above was probably Smollett. The Colonel Clowes mentioned was a member of the same family as that to which the Rev. John Clowes belonged; and Edward Hall was a son of the Rev. Samuel Hall, which shows that he had difficulties to contend with in the discipline of his own sons, though happily, in this case, the young lad was luckier than some others in making a circle homewards.

De Quincey, if he did not find much to stir his emulation at Winkfield, met with not a little praise. Here is one of his earliest essays written there, which bears marks of high commendation from his teacher. The reader will perhaps be pleased to notice in a production even of this early age some promise, in its turns of style and easy flow, of the future writer. It is printed exactly as written, even to punctuation and the abundant use of capitals, as was much the fashion then:—

“Noscitur a sociis.

“Of the many Criteria by which we may judge of a Man’s Temper, Habits, and Disposition, none is less liable to deceive us, none more invariably certain than the Character of his Companions. Every Man, who has the Liberty of choice, will select those as his Friends and Associates, whose

Manners, whose Ideas and whose Inclinations are most congenial with his own. A Person of unruly Passions, and unrestrained Desires, hot, fiery and impetuous, eager of command, and disdainful of Submission, will never seek an Intimacy with the humble, the gentle, and the unaspiring. He would despise them, he would consider them as ignoble, sluggish Spirits ; now, Contempt and real Friendship can never subsist together ; they are incompatible. In the same manner, a covetous Man will find little enjoyment in the Society of a Spendthrift, or even of a person liberal without bounds. They will mutually condemn each other. A brave Man and a Coward are under the same restraint with regard to Friendship ; they cannot coalesce. The first will feel himself too much degraded, and the other will be too conscious of his inferiority, ever to derive the slightest pleasure from Association. All contraries are repugnant to each other : it is for this reason that Men, as was observed before, always mix most with those on whom Nature or Habit has conferred a Temper correspondent, in the most prominent Features to their own. By this, therefore, we may know them.

“It is a very general Remark, that there is no rule without an exception ; and this Axiom accordingly of distinguishing Men by their Connections, in some cases does not undoubtedly hold good. But then we must observe, it is only with regard to those Societies which have not been formed voluntarily, but by compulsion, or some other reason than

Inclination. Thus Addison, for instance, delighted in the Company of Wits, of Poets, and of Scholars, (at any rate of such, as were not able to enter into competition with him;) and yet we hear that sometimes in those seasons, when every Man, who is wearied with long intellectual exertions, seeks for ease, he condescended to solace himself with the company of a Barber. Now, had any one, who met him in such Society, formed his opinion of him immediately by the Ignorance of his Company, he would have been led into an error. For Addison was pleased with his humble Friend only in his Intervals of Idleness and Inaction, and probably then merely to heighten his Relish for the Society of Men more on a level with himself; in the same manner as persons frequently undergo bodily Labour voluntarily, that they may have a more lively sense of the pleasure arising from Sleep and Quiet. No Man, it is very certain, will ever habitually and systematically associate with Characters dissimilar in their leading Features to his own. By his Companions, therefore, may every one be known."

CHAPTER III.

WITH LORD WESTPORT.

THERE are quite a sheaf of letters respecting the tour with Lord Westport, supplementing what has been already told to the world by De Quincey himself and others of the episodes connected with that association. The first we shall present to the reader is one from the Rev. Mr. Grace, Lord Westport's tutor, as follows:—

I.

“ERON, *July 2, 1800.*

“MY DEAR DE QUINCEY,—I am not at all surprised that you should seem uneasy at not hearing from me. However, as I understand that my promise was to give you *timely* notice and instructions respecting the time you were to meet us, and as I have been waiting for answers to different letters upon which my determinations in some degree depend, I did not think it necessary to trouble you until I could speak decidedly.

“I find I cannot yet fix any accurate time or place for meeting in the road, and a disappointment to either party, even of a day, would be inconvenient ;

so that I think the best plan is for you to come to us here, and perhaps when you see how we get on, you might think and your mother might agree to your finishing your school education here with us. But this by the bye. However, as Lord Westport certainly leaves this on the 19th, I must beg that you will hold yourself *in readiness*, and unless you hear from me, in the meantime, proposing some other scheme, I shall expect to see you here at farthest by the 14th.

“The Bath coach passes through *Slough*, within a short walk of our house: there you can leave your portmanteau till I send for it.

“Westport is not put down in many of the old maps, but it is situated exactly on the spot marked Newport in them, at the eastern extremity of Clew Bay, and due west of Castlebar; its distance from Dublin is 125 Irish miles. It is not certain that I shall go all the way, perhaps only to the Head, but in this you will find no disadvantage. Lord Westport is to have a French servant, who I hope will speak nothing to either of you but in that language, and if it is not Westport’s fault, you will more than supply my place.

“Lord Altamont expresses great pleasure at the prospect of your society, and I have no doubt but you will be pleased with him and improved by his conversation.—I remain yours very truly,

“THOMAS GRACE.”

II.

The next is a letter to his mother from Dublin, written shortly after their arrival there:—

“DUBLIN, *Saturday, July 26th, 1800.*

“DEAR AND HONOURED MOTHER,—Yesterday morning about seven o’clock we landed at Dunleary (which is a small town at the distance of five miles from Dublin.) We immediately took a jingle,¹ and got into the city at a little after eight. Our voyage was not a very quick one. We went on board about half-past eleven on Wednesday evening and were under weigh exactly at twelve; so that, reckoning from twelve o’clock on Wednesday night to six o’clock on Friday morning (which was the hour at which we left the packet), our passage was thirty hours long. The reason of our being so long was, that about two o’clock on Thursday afternoon the breeze, which had never been very strong, began to drop. We were then nine miles from Dunleary. About six the next morning we were just in the same situation. Several fat gentlemen began to entertain apprehensions that, as all our *prog* was gone, we might be starved. Some thought we should be driven back by the *calm* to Holyhead. Others feared we should be shipwrecked on some rock about there. However, after we had been becalmed for fourteen hours the sailors hailed a

¹ “I don’t know whether jingles were in fashion when you were here. The best definition I can give of them is—a rotten sociable drawn by one skeleton.”

boat (which they could not see for the very thick fog: how they knew it was there, I can't guess). When the boat arrived, those jumped in who could get first. As Lord Westport had two servants with him, he and I easily got a place. There were about thirty of us in a very small boat—more would have come, and the rowers of the skiff were very willing to have taken in more, but that a very old, and, as I heard, a very experienced naval officer declared, that if one more person of any *weight* (at which several of the fat gentlemen on deck turned away) should come in, we must sink. I don't suppose this was exactly true, but, however, it had a very good effect, by instantly persuading all the men in the boat to hinder any more from coming in.

“Among the passengers in the packet was the Countess of Conyngham. She had three children with her, the eldest of which (Lord Mount Charles) was not above five years old. Her Ladyship, who sat the whole time in her coach, seeing me sitting on deck reading, called me to the coach window, where she talked with me for about five minutes, and then made me come into the coach, and stay the remainder of the day with her. She conversed with me for above eight hours, and seemed a very sensible woman. She is pretty, and *something*, or rather *very* like a person I have seen, but whose name I cannot recollect. She gave me an invitation to come and see her at Slaine (Lord Conyngham's country-seat), about twenty-four miles from Dublin.

“Lord Altamont has just been made a Knight of

the Order of the Blue Riband. He is to be installed next Wednesday but one—(August 7th)—on which account we do not leave Dublin till the Thursday following. I and Lord W. are to be at the installation. Next Friday or Saturday we go to see the Irish House of Lords sitting for the *last* time. Everybody comes to Lord Altamont with open mouths, to tell him they hear he is soon to be created a Marquis. —Believe me, my dear mother, your very affectionate son,

T. DE QUINCEY.

“*N.B.*—I was not at all sea-sick. I did not feel the least inclination to be so.

“If you write to me, my dear mother, before I leave Dublin, you must direct to me, if you please, at No. 9 Sackville Street.

“1800.”

III.

The third is a portion of a letter to his mother, supplementing what he had said in letters, which have already been published in the Memoir, giving in brief a sketch of the daily life at Westport:—

“Lord Altamont generally rises at seven, comes down at eight, breakfasts at nine, goes out at twelve, comes home at half-past four, dines at six, drinks tea between eight and nine, and goes to bed a little after ten. I and Westport rise at various times between half-past four and six. I read the Bible before breakfast and Lord Westport writes copies and ciphers. We breakfast with Lord Altamont,

then read again, then ride and bathe till about two or three o'clock, when we dine (for neither I nor Westport are able to wait till six). In the afternoon I read and write and Westport plays with his cousins. At about seven o'clock we sup on bread and milk and fruit (which is also our breakfast), and at nine go to bed. . . . I think I told you in my last that Lord Altamont is to be created a Marquis. If he is, as most people say he will be, Marquis of Louisa-bourg, then Lord Westport will be Earl of Altamont. . . . I am very well indeed, owing principally, I suppose, to the change of air, sea-bathing, and drinking no tea.

"I forgot to tell you in my account of the installation that we left the Cathedral about three o'clock. At six there was a grand dinner at the Castle: galleries were erected for spectators, but as I had no inclination to sit and see half a hundred Lords stuffing and getting drunk, I gave my ticket away. The ball which is usually given on the night of the installation is now deferred until Jan. 1, 1801. At St. Patrick's I saw Lord and Lady Conyngham. They invited me to *Slaine* (a country-seat of theirs about twenty-four miles from Dublin). The invitation, of course, I did not accept, as we leave this to-morrow. Directly behind me stood Lord Grey de Wilton. A Mrs. Sparrow, who was near us, happening to ask some questions of me respecting Lord Altamont's dress, Lord Grey instantly looked at me, and asked if my name was not De Quincey: on my answering 'Yes,' 'Oh, sir,' said

he, 'you're a young countryman of mine, and so we must shake hands.' How his Lordship should know me, I can't tell, because I never recollect having *seen* him, except once or twice at the Manchester Grammar School on the Speech Day."

IV.

The fourth is a letter to his sister Mary, written toward the end of his stay at Westport:—

"WESTPORT, *September 3, 1800.*

"MY DEAR, VERY DEAR GIRL,—As letters in general take eight days in going from this side of Ireland to the middle of England, I am afraid that if I do not write soon, I shall be at home before my letter. We leave Westport next Monday, Sept. 8. Lord Altamont says we cannot reach Dublin till the Wednesday following. The distance from Westport to Dublin is only 150 English miles, and I have been trying to persuade him that we could get there by Tuesday night. However, as we travel the whole way with the same horses, his Lordship thinks it would be quite impossible. From Dublin we sail by the first Parkgate packet. The average time which the packets take in going over is three days. But they are often much longer. Lord Altamont and Dean Browne were six weeks on this passage *once*, being obliged continually to put in at different ports. So that it is quite uncertain, you see, when I shall arrive in England. Parkgate is 170 miles from Eton. Dean Browne goes with us up to Dublin.

But as we cross the Channel and go the rest of the journey without anybody except servants, Lord Altamont wishes me to accompany Westport up to Eton. *Where* I am to go, and *what* I am to do after I get there, I know no more than the man in the moon.

“If my mother would write immediately on receipt of this informing me how I am to proceed, she might direct either to the Hotel at Chester (to be left until I arrive) or to Coventry. If my mother does not approve of my going the whole way up to Eton with Westport, I could, by receiving a letter at either of these places, turn off and go by the *Shrewsbury coach*. The inn at Coventry is—(I don’t know what). I remember we have some friends at Coventry, whose name I cannot for my life recollect. So that it would be better to direct to the inn.

“If my mother does not object to my going up to Eton, but has some scheme for me after I arrive there, she may direct to the White Hart at Windsor, or to any other place on the road where it will be most convenient. If I receive no letter on the road, I shall conclude my mother wishes me to go to Eton with Westport, and come down in the coach to Bath. I shall most probably be at Chester on Sunday, Sept. 14th.

“Westport I cannot now describe to you for want of room. The house is fine and large, and not much injured by the French and the Rebels.¹ The grounds

¹ The first Irish Rebellion of 1798 was successfully ended by the Battle of Vinegar Hill. But some months later a French force of over

are very beautiful, though not kept in very neat order. There are two parks—fine groves and lawns, through which runs a fine river, every now and then rolling with a tremendous noise over artificial weirs. We spent all our time in reading, writing, riding, bathing, hunting, shooting, and boating. All these, except the two first, the Irish think it a disgrace not to understand. Notwithstanding the dangerous places through which we are continually riding, I have never yet been thrown. I shall probably introduce a young friend to you when I see you next. I think you will like him (or her). You may puzzle your brains day and night, but it will be all to no purpose: you will never find out who this young friend is. You once saw a relation of his (or hers)—or twice, I believe, but you were rather afraid of him.—Believe me, my dear girl, your ever-affectionate brother,

T. DE QUINCEY.

“*P.S.*—I had left a blank space at the last line but one of page 2, supposing that Lord Altamont knew the name of the inn at Coventry. I have just asked him, and he says he has forgotten it. Westport thinks it is the Crown. Probably my mother knows: if she does not, she might direct to the Post-Office.

1000 men landed with the French General Humbert at their head, and anew excited the Irish to rise, which they did, and maintained resistance with varying success till Lord Cornwallis effectually put an end to it, making prisoners of all that remained of Humbert's army. De Quincey at Westport was in one of the very centres of the Rebellion, and could not but have been affected by much that he heard of it then, and thus prepared for what he was to read afterwards; embodying his impressions in two chapters of his “Autobiographic Sketches.”

My love to my dear mother: I have directed at a venture, supposing that if you are not at Bath, Mrs. B. will forward this to Tixover."

Tixover was the residence of Mrs. Schreiber, one of Mrs. de Quincey's most intimate friends. De Quincey has told her story in outline in the second part ("The Orphan Heiresses") of the chapter "Laxton" in the "Autobiographic Sketches:" how, when quite young, she became the wife of one Harvey, a country gentleman—"Geronian horseman," says De Quincey—and she was early left a widow, fascinating in many ways. Colonel Watson, the father of the Miss Watson who later became Lady Carbery, and of whom we hear so much in the early recollections, made her an offer of marriage, which she declined; later to wed a very rich old merchant named Schreiber, with whom before many years she disagreed, and separated from him on an allowance of somewhere about two thousand per annum. She was in this position when Colonel Watson and General Smith committed their two motherless daughters—"the orphan heiresses"—to her care. They had either never known or consciously remembered their mothers; the fathers of both having been in India, they had seen very little of them, and both fathers dying in India, soon after their return from that visit when they settled the girls with Mrs. Schreiber, that lady became *in loco parentis* absolutely to both, and devoted herself to their education, training, and welfare. "Chiefly on

Miss Watson's account it was at first that she extended her maternal cares to General Smith's daughter; but very soon, so sweet and winning was the disposition of Miss Smith, that Mrs. Schreiber apparently loved her the best." These ladies, being heiresses, had many suitors—"as many as Penelope," De Quincey says in banter—Lord Belgrave being among those that sought Miss Watson's hand, ultimately given to Lord Carbery, and Miss Smith married a rich West Indian proprietor.

V.

The fifth letter was written at the same time, and addressed to his sister Jane, then at school:—

"WESTPORT, *Wednesday, Sept. 3, 1800.*

"MY DEAR JANE,—You desired me, I remember (one day after you had complained of my never writing to you), to favour you (for be assured I consider it as a very great favour) with one letter from Ireland. I ain't quite certain if I promised you this terribly great favour: however, as I can now spare a little time, I will endeavour to give you a short account of the manner in which I have passed my time since I left you.

"On Monday, July 14, you will recollect that I left Bath early in the morning. Eton I reached without accident about seven in the evening; so that, allowing for the time I took in eating, &c., I was not more than twelve hours going about ninety miles. As soon as I arrived at Eton I found that

Lord Westport had gone with his tutor (Mr. Grace) to a *fête* given by the Queen at Frogmore. Thither I immediately followed them, and after staying a little in the ball-room and walking about the gardens with Westport and Lord Percy (the Duke of Northumberland's son) I returned to Eton. The next day Westport, Mr. Grace, and I went to Porters Lodge, the seat of the late Lord Howe. We were received by Lady Howe (Lord Westport's grandmother, who is since dead), Lady Altamont (his mother), and Lord Morton. On the following day we left Porters and went up to London; in the evening we returned to Eton. Thursday I spent in writing letters, &c. Friday nearly in the same manner, except that in the evening I went to the play at Windsor. On Saturday we set out on our journey for Holyhead. We reached Birmingham (which is about 103 miles from Eton) about nine o'clock that night. On Sunday we went about seventy miles, and slept at Corwen. On Monday we travelled the same number of miles, and reached Holyhead at ten o'clock.

"The packet in which we were to have sailed was just going off. Unfortunately, however, Lord Altamont's servants were not arrived, so that we were obliged to stay. On Tuesday the servants came, but as our packet sailed that day, we were under the necessity of remaining at the Head till Wednesday night, when we embarked at twelve o'clock. On Friday morning we arrived at Dublin. Lord Altamont had lately been made Knight of St.

Patrick, and was obliged to wait in town until the installation. This grand ceremony was performed in the Cathedral of St. Patrick on Monday, August 11. We did not leave Dublin until the Wednesday following, August 13, so that we stayed very nearly three weeks in Dublin. On Wednesday night we reached Charleville, the seat of Lord Tullamore, where we slept. On Thursday we slept at Milough. Friday we passed the day and slept at the Archbishop of Tuam's. On Saturday, August 16, at one o'clock, we arrived at Westport, Lord Altamont's family seat.

"Since then I have passed my time very pleasantly. It is but seldom I can find any time to write letters. I should not have been able to write this but by giving up a shooting party. So that you must not expect another letter from me till I return home, which will be very soon. We leave this place on Monday next, September 8. We shall get to Dublin on or before Wednesday night, and shall sail by the first Parkgate packet. I suppose you have geography enough to know that Parkgate is situated near Chester, on the River Dee, twice as far from Dublin as Holyhead. This passage is very dangerous, so that they are often obliged to put in at different ports and wait for several weeks. Persons are in general no more than three days in going over, but sometimes much longer. I cannot therefore say how soon I shall be at Parkgate. As we travel, of course, with four horses, I shall certainly not be more than *three*, probably only *two*, days in

going to Bath.—Believe me your very affectionate brother,

T. DE QUINCEY."

VI.

It would appear that Mr. Grace's suggestion that De Quincey should go to Eton and join Lord Westport was more seriously taken up by his mother than might have been anticipated from her character. If we may judge from the following letter, it was De Quincey himself who put obstacles in the way of this plan being carried out, since it is evident, from what he heard from his friends in Ireland of the goings on there, that he felt he would be miserable and out of his element among them. The letter is dated August 26, 1800:—

"MY DEAR AND HONOURED MOTHER,—I duly received your letter, and am very sorry indeed to hear of Mrs. Schreiber's illness, and hope most sincerely that Dr. Cowper may be mistaken.

"Secondly (which to me is the most important thing), about Eton. Eton I am certain you will not like. . . . From all I can hear, the discipline of the school is certainly not what one would expect, and surely not what it should be. Westport and Dominic Brown, his cousin, have told me enough to make me sure of that; and the morals of the place are evidently at a low ebb.

"Any one who should *attempt* to differ from the rest of the boys, who should express the least dis-

approbation of their plans, or not wholly consent to them and join *in* them, would be literally tormented to death. The first thing they do in such a case as this (for a specimen or earnest of what is to follow) is to fling the boy into the Thames with ropes tied to him, by which they pull him out, not, however, before he is so nearly dead as to require medical assistance to recover him. You may judge of the discipline of the school when I tell you that a week ago they beat an old porter (in defiance of the masters, some of whom were standing by, and hardly trying to prevent them) with such brutality that his life, I hear, is despaired of. My situation, as a boy on the foundation, would be still more miserable.

“About the play: I think, if you knew *all* the circumstances, you would acquit me of *all* want of resolution, and would allow that it required something more than *that* to refuse going.

“As to Lady Conyngham: she certainly talked very sensibly (at least I thought so) about ‘Zimmermann on Solitude,’ and many other authors, English and French. She may be more beautiful than the fair Rosamond, but I could not discover it (and I have seen her since). Her face is indeed very charming and her smile enchanting, but I should only call her pretty. For in her eyes and her figure, and indeed in everything, she is, I think, infinitely inferior to Lady Carbery.

“Mrs. Burgess, I remember, desired me to see whether Molly’s (*alias* Mary’s) brother, who was

a short time ago quartered at Westport, is still here. As I do not know Molly's surname or her brother's regiment, it is of course impossible for me to find him out. However, if she will inform me as to those two particulars, I will inquire for him.

“Oxford I admired *very much* myself, from the *very little* I saw of it in passing through. I am extremely rejoiced at Mr. W. Hey's approaching recovery. Pray, is Mr. Grosvenor the surgeon of whom you and Mrs. Pratt were talking in your road to Bristol last half-year?”

CHAPTER IV.

LETTERS FROM LORD ALTAMONT (LATER MARQUIS OF SLIGO).

WHAT was remarked in the Memoir about De Quincey's repose and gravity of manner, early formed, making him a fit companion for men of mature and even of advanced years, no less than his power of interesting himself in many subjects, finds further confirmation in letters which have been recovered addressed to him by the Earl of Altamont (afterwards Marquis of Sligo), father of his early friend and companion, Lord Westport.¹ It is very evident that the boy was just as much favoured by the father as by the son, and his society and conversation found as attractive and congenial by the one as by the other. Evidently for a mere boy he left a very vivid and grateful impression behind him on many minds in Ireland ; and it is thus evident that he did in no wise over-estimate the impression which he had made in those sketches which he penned so many years afterwards.

Mrs. Baird Smith and Miss de Quincey were at first averse to printing these letters, deeming that

¹ John Denis Browne, who was third Earl of Altamont and first Marquis of Sligo, had been M.P. for Co. Mayo, and sat in the House of Lords as Baron Monteagle of Westport from 1806 to his death in 1809.

it might be said of them that they were desirous to celebrate, if not to exaggerate, the footing of familiarity on which their father and his family stood to persons of rank. I was compelled to represent to them the value of these letters as establishing, both directly and indirectly, the truth of certain things that Mr. de Quincey had written, and more especially with respect to points on which Dr. Maginn and others, following him, had been pleased to express themselves in no very sympathetic or appreciative way. In answer to my representations, Mrs. Baird Smith wrote to me as follows,—a letter which will define her feelings and those of her sister, and surely relieve them from any reproach of the kind she fears :—

“MY DEAR DR. JAPP,—We had intended to ask you to leave the Altamont letters out of the volume, as having, in our idea, no special literary or biographical interest; but in the light of a recent incident, and of the information received both from you and another that this is but the echo of some old libellous attempt to disparage my father’s genius by disparaging his character, we have, on reflection, come to the conclusion that they had better be introduced, as you had done at first, in their proper place, even at the risk, from the rank of their writer, of our object being mistaken by so doing. Our object is, where lapse of time admits of this, to establish my father’s claim to strict truthfulness on matters of fact, even when relating to what may be

regarded as the most erratic circumstances connected especially with his earlier career ; and it so happens that, on one point on which this was questioned by a somewhat vulgar-minded man many years ago, we see these letters more than bear out my father's statement ; your insight has enabled you to detect that they bear him out in other important directions.

—I am, my dear Dr. Japp, always yours sincerely,

“ FLORENCE BAIRD SMITH.”

The first letter was written by Lord Altamont to De Quincey very soon after he had returned home from his Irish tour :—

I.

“ WESTPORT HOUSE, *September 22, 1800.*

“ MY DEAR DE QUINCEY,—I am to thank you much for your kind letter from Parkgate, which reached me yesterday. The only letter which came here for you since you left us has been carefully forwarded. I shall receive your ode, or anything else from your pen, with particular pleasure, whenever your leisure allows you to bestow any of your valuable time less worthily than your present chief pursuit, which is, and ought to be, your own improvement.

“ I trust you will continue your recollection of your Irish friends ; and as you were so good and zealous an Englishman here, so I hope you will argue for us when we are unjustly censured by those

who, from not having claims of their own, may have been refused those marks of attention and regard which I can answer for your having met with everywhere—from the wilds of Croagh Phadring (*vulgariter*), Crook Patrick, to the drawing-room at St. James's; and I really should regret having made your acquaintance if I did not hope for a continuance of your friendship and remembrance.

“Lady Altamont is not yet arrived, but I expect her hourly: she will join me in thanking your mother for allowing you to come over here. I hope most sincerely that you have got back to her in perfect health and safety. I am afraid Lord Pickle was a tart companion in your journey. I don't expect his disposition to riot was controlled by the sagacity of his mentor Largeaux (his French valet).

“Our stormy weather has begun here; and a part of Mr. Campbell's dam, in which you may recollect I was engaged to keep up water behind my house, has been carried away, and gone I know not where—perhaps to add to the soil on the shores of our next western neighbour, North America.

“We had a sad disaster here just as you left us: one of my footmen died mad in three days of illness. The season has been generally not healthful in Ireland; but we are promised abundance and better times in future. Adieu, my dear little friend; pray recollect Westport enough to consent to return to it when you cannot consent to employ yourself better.—Believe me sincerely and affectionately yours,

“ALTAMONT.”

The above letter was addressed to "Mr. Thomas de Quincey, the Right Honourable Lord Carbery's, Laxton Hall, near Stamford, Leicestershire." The next letter, which bears date January 12, 1801, is addressed to "the care of G. Lawson, Esq., Long Millgate, Manchester"—the Manchester Grammar-School:—

II.

"MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,—I have just had the pleasure of a line from you, after having for some months expected it. Your remembrance of me is highly gratifying.

"I am just now recovering from a severe and dangerous illness—two fevers, the one following the other, which brought me to death's door, and from which I have escaped most miraculously. I am not yet sufficiently recovered to think of setting out upon a journey, which keeps me in Ireland, though I purposed to have passed the last two months in London.

"In course of the spring I still purpose being in England, and I trust I shall not leave it without seeing you somewhere or other. I have very flattering accounts of my boy; he has profited by your good example. As to the long-promised ode, I shall receive it with much pleasure whenever you are so good as to send it. I am sorry, however, I cannot undertake the polishing part of it, though I imagine it will not require any, from the specimen of a similar kind which I saw from the same hand.

“Direct always to me in Dublin. We are perfectly tranquil here, and better off in point of food than you are in England. My great waterworks which you saw me engaged in have succeeded to my utmost satisfaction. Whenever you pay me another visit you will find great alterations and improvements made here. You are in the midst of industry at Manchester, and I make no doubt profiting by it. It is the real source of wealth, prosperity, and happiness, both national and individual. Were I where you are I would soon understand the process of cotton-making. When in Lusatia and Silesia I learnt check-making, and brought it home here in tolerable perfection. I never, indeed, went anywhere without trying to pick up something for the improvement of my neighbourhood. You tasted the ale which I learnt to make by a visit to Lord Bath’s, and you saw also, I believe, the industry of every kind round Westport exceeds that of all the rest of Ireland through which you passed.—Believe me affectionately yours,

SLIGO.”

It may be as well to explain here that Lord Altamont had become Marquis of Sligo in December 1800, and that in 1806 he was created a baron of the United Kingdom under the title Baron Montcagle of Westport, Co. Mayo. He was born on the 11th June 1756, and had married in May 1787 Lady Louisa Howe, daughter of Earl Howe. Lord Westport, their eldest son, was born 18th May 1788, and was thus twelve years of age in 1800;

De Quincey being then fifteen, having been born in 1785.

With regard to the ode which Lord Sligo refers to as having been seen by him, it was that which De Quincey, while still at Winkfield School, had sent in competition for a prize offered by the proprietors of the *Juvenile Library*—a verse translation of Horace's 22nd Ode. The first prize was awarded to Leigh Hunt, De Quincey's senior by a year, who had just left Christ's Hospital, where he had been "first Deputy Grecian," and De Quincey stood third; but the three odes adjudged the prizes were printed in the periodical, so that critics could judge for themselves. Dr. R. Garnett, who printed the version of De Quincey in his edition of the "Confessions" in the Parchment Library series, holds that De Quincey should have had the first prize; and, according to De Quincey himself, others at Westport were of the same opinion. He writes in the "Autobiographic Sketches"—"The Nation of London:"—

"Lord Morton . . . was the only gentleman who appeared at the dinner-table. He took particular interest in literature; and it was, in fact, through *his* kindness that, for the first time in my life, I found myself somewhat in the situation of a literary *lion*. The occasion of Lord Morton's flattering notice was a particular copy of verses which had gained for me a public distinction: not, however, I must own, a very brilliant one; the prize awarded to me being not the first, nor even the

second—what on the Continent is called ‘the *accessit*’—it was simply the third; and that fact, stated nakedly, might have left it doubtful whether I was to be considered in the light of one honoured or of one stigmatised. However, the judges in this case, with more honesty or more self-distrust than belongs to most adjudications of the kind, had printed the first three of the successful essays. Consequently it was left open to each of the less successful candidates to benefit by any difference of taste among their several friends; and *my* friends in particular, *with the single and singular exception of my mother, who always thought her own children inferior to other people’s*, had generally assigned the palm to myself. Lord Morton protested loudly that the case admitted of no doubt; that gross injustice had been done me; and as the ladies of the family were much influenced by his opinion, I thus came not only to wear the laurel in their estimation, but also with the advantageous addition of having suffered some injustice. I was not only a victor, but a victor in misfortune.”

The next letter from Lord Sligo is dated from Grafton Street, London, May 5, 1801, and is to this effect:—

III.

“MY DEAR DE QUINCEY,—Your letter directed to Dublin came to me from thence this day. I shall

be very glad to get the long-promised ode when it is completed.

“The disorder you complain of is certainly of very recent acquirement, and therefore may the more easily be got the better of, as I sincerely hope it will, and speedily. When we were more acquainted you had no disposition to idleness at all. I have been here some weeks, and have just sent my boy back to school, having had him here for the holidays. If he had as little of the disease of idleness as you have, I should do more with him than I expect to do; but he has a great deal of good in him, and what is not right I hope is corrigible. I wish you may be at leisure to pay us another visit at Westport soon. Our good news recently will, I hope, ensure our tranquillity; but I am sorry to assure you, from the extravagant demands of the First Consul, peace is out of the question for the present.—Believe me, with sincere regards, yours affectionately,

“SLIGO.”

IV.

The only other letter that remains of those written to De Quincey by Lord Sligo is addressed to him at the “Post-Office, Bangor,” and bears date November 8, 1802, during De Quincey’s wanderings in Wales. This letter is of the utmost value, as proving that De Quincey was wandering about Bangor at the time he says he was. It is evident, however, that he had not made Lord Sligo fully aware of the exact

position in which he then was, else undoubtedly more evidence of it would have appeared in a letter from one who had shown such friendly sympathy and genuine interest in his welfare :—

“ WESTPORT HOUSE, *November 8, 1802.*

“ MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,—I derived great pleasure from the note you so kindly addressed to me from Bangor, which came to my hands yesterday.

“ Altamont¹ left us about fourteen days ago. I am almost surprised that you did not meet him, as he went to Holyhead and through North Wales. Whenever your business or your idleness allows of it, I shall be happy to have a line from you, and shall always feel a sincere interest in all which concerns you. When you come to Bangor next, I hope you will recollect how short a distance it is from hence. I should much like you to see all the great works of improvement in which I have been engaged, and generally got through successfully. Our great misfortune in these parts for some years to come will be our entire dependence on *peace* for the comfortable possession of what we have. I never hear of anything like another Revolution in France without trembling for the effect it may have upon us here ; for our rebellions and the French invasion have left bad effects, which it will take many years wholly to wipe out. Adieu, my dear

¹ Lord Westport had been raised to the courtesy title of Earl of Altamont on his father's accession to the Marquisate of Sligo.

little friend.—Believe me very truly and affectionately yours,
SLIGO."

The ready and full appreciation De Quincey had already met with in many quarters, and from persons whose judgment he could not but have respected, in contrast with the cold disparagement, or at least reserve, on all such matters that he met with from his mother—a subject on which we shall have to speak again—and with the pedantic patronage, if not brusque vulgarity, of Mr. Lawson,¹ and the utter dogmatism and the old-fashioned domineering manner of the Rev. Samuel Hall, his most active guardian, could not but have stirred in his mind, or in the mind of any clever youth, a rankling sense of injustice. Consideration and appreciation, like charity, should surely begin at home; but certainly it was not so in De Quincey's case, and one of the very best proofs of our position would be found in letters from Mr. Hall, his guardian, which will be given in a later chapter.

Readers of De Quincey will remember how, in the "London Reminiscences," he naïvely digresses to tell why he, who as a boy had moved among the nobility, felt that he could no longer do so: "I saw that my own dignity, which, above all things, a man should scrupulously maintain, required that I should no longer go into any circles where I

¹ "Psha, blockhead!" we learn from a good authority, was the formula with which Mr. Lawson was in the habit of addressing his pupils.

did not stand on my own native footing—*proprio jure*. . . . What had been abundantly right for me as a boy ceased to be right for me when I ceased to be a boy.”

Mr. George Saintsbury, in a most characteristic article in *Macmillan's Magazine* for July 1890, appears to be very sceptical about much in the “Autobiographic Sketches” and the “Confessions,” and indeed declares himself inclined to doubt any statement for which we have only De Quincey's authority. “It has to be remembered,” he writes, “that for all these details” (concerning his entrance at college, &c.) “we have little security but De Quincey himself—a security which I confess I like not;” and with regard to his claim to have in his boyish days moved among the aristocracy Mr. Saintsbury says: “It was at Bath, his headquarters being there, that he met, *according to his own account*” (*italics are ours*), “various persons of distinction—Lord Westport, Lord and Lady Carbery—who figure largely in the autobiography, but are never heard of afterwards.” Many doubts have been expressed and sneers put forth on this matter, as though De Quincey had claimed much more in this respect than he was entitled to; these letters from the Marquis of Sligo will, we think, suffice to set that question at rest, and convince any fair-minded man that the reason why these people of rank figured in the “Autobiography” and “Confessions,” and were not heard of afterwards, was, not that they shrank from maintaining acquaintance and friend-

ship with De Quincey, but that he withdrew himself from association with them; and there is no good ground to doubt this, for the reason hinted at by himself in the passage quoted above. His misfortunes due to his running away from school, and the opium-eating habit into which he fell soon after entering Oxford, are reasons sufficient why he should retreat from such society; and there is no ground whatever for doubting that his motive as there given was the true one.

With respect to the "De" in the name, we may here repeat in substance what was said in the Memoir. Not De Quincey himself, but his mother it was that assumed or resumed it; and then some time after, when she became deeply evangelical in her religious views, was inclined to drop it, as a worldly vanity. Sometimes her daughter Jane, who at certain periods was most influenced by her, used it, sometimes not, as the letters hereafter printed will show. And even if, as Mr. Saintsbury has said, and others have said, De Quincey himself assumed or resumed the "De," what of that? Moral offence in modifying a name, or even changing a name, there is none; else it would fare hard with some even of our peers. The Jews with few exceptions change their names. But with regard to De Quincey, he is charged with modifying his name, as though there were some hardly innocent enormity in it, whereas it was the most allowable and common thing even so late as that day, when neither names nor the spelling of words were quite so fixed as they are

now ; and we never hear nowadays, or even after Defoe was dead, of any one blaming Defoe for calling himself Defoe instead of Foe. But on this point, and some peculiar coincidences arising, see the Appendix.

CHAPTER V.

AT THE MANCHESTER GRAMMAR-SCHOOL.

THE circumstances under which De Quincey went to the Manchester Grammar-School are either well known to the reader or can be learned from the Memoir. He himself was averse to going there from the first. He felt that he was ready to enter the University, and petitioned either to be entered there or allowed to pursue his favourite studies at home. To neither of these proposals would his mother and guardians consent, being prudently desirous that he should secure the allowance of fifty pounds per annum granted for several years to successful scholars at the Manchester Grammar-School after a residence there of three years; and this, added to his own income of £150, they felt would make residence there comfortable and easy. But ill-health and great depression set in during his first year there, and his miseries, as painted by himself in many letters, failed to move them.

One resource seems to have been open to him, which would have brought more effective alleviation had he not by ill-health become incapacitated to take advantage of it in any adequate measure. The senior boys at the Manchester Grammar-School were

certainly far from being ordinary boys, and in their society—which is more than could have been said for boyish society in many schools in those days—he could have found stimulus and improvement. Among them were lads whom he could at once admire and respect, of whom, in more favourable circumstances, he would have made choice companions.

Those who were more closely associated with him in the first form were youths of exceptionally high aims, and endowed with intellects of a very rare order. From his own account, the conversations that took place were of a type uncommon even at public schools of higher repute than that of Manchester; touching, and in the most scholarly and philosophic spirit, questions the most critical and abstruse, and moving with a freedom, ease, and originality hardly to be surpassed among any group of schoolboys then in England. At Winkfield, De Quincey had found himself without stimulus of this kind, and had made it one of his great objections to the school: at Manchester he found himself, as regards this, more in his element. “I learned,” he says, “to feel a deep respect for my new school-fellows: deep it was then, and a larger experience has made it deeper. I have since known many literary men—men whose profession was literature, and who sometimes had with one special section or nook of literature an acquaintance critically minute. But amongst such men I have found but three or four who had a knowledge which came as near to what I should consider a comprehensive knowledge

as really existed among these boys collectively. What one boy had not, another had ; and thus, by continual intercourse, the fragmentary contribution of one being integrated by the fragmentary contributions of others, gradually the attainments of each separate individual became, in some degree, the collective attainments of the whole senior common-room."

Readers of the "Confessions" will remember, in the later edition, the record of the boy G——, who figures so honourably and receives so high an encomium for his knowledge and insight in the account of that conversation on the Evidences of Christianity in which De Quincey tells us he took part on the first night of his removal to the headquarters at Millgate. G—— had, according to De Quincey, either picked a lock which neither Grotius nor Paley had quite succeeded in opening, or had indicated the outline of a better work than either had accomplished. He writes :—

"Meantime, as a solitary act of silent observation in a boy not fifteen, this deciphering idea of G——'s, in direct resistance to the received idea, extorted my admiration, and equally whether true or false, as regarded the immediate fact. That any person, in the very middle storm of chase, when a headlong movement carries all impulses into one current, should in the twinkling of an eye recall himself to the unexpected 'doubles' of the game, wheel as *that* wheels, and sternly resist the instincts of the one preoccupying assumption, argues a sagacity not

often heard of in boyhood. Was G—— right? In that case he picked a lock which others had failed to pick. Was he wrong? In that case he sketched the idea and outline of a better work (better, as more original and more special in its service) than any which Grotius had himself accomplished.”

And he speaks of G—— as “a boy whom subsequently I had reason to admire as especially courageous, truthful, and far-seeing.” Not a few readers will be glad to know that this boy G—— was none other than the late venerated and esteemed Dr. Gilbert, Bishop of Chichester. We learn from the “Dictionary of National Biography” that Ashurst Turner Gilbert (born 17th May 1786, and therefore some eight or nine months younger than De Quincey) was the son of Thomas Gilbert of Ratcliffe, Buckinghamshire, a captain in the Royal Marines, and was educated at the Manchester Grammar-School from 1800 to 1805. Having been nominated to a school exhibition, he proceeded to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he highly distinguished himself, being placed in the first class *in literis humanoribus*, one of his four companions being the famous Sir Robert Peel, Bart. He proceeded to his degrees of M.A. and B.D. in due course, having already been elected to a fellowship. He was actively engaged for many years as a college tutor, and in 1816–1818 was a public examiner. He was elected Principal of Brasenose in 1822, and held that office for twenty years. From 1836 to 1840 he was Vice-Chancellor of the University, and in 1842 was nominated by the

Duke of Wellington to the bishopric of Chichester. "To the oversight of his diocese Dr. Gilbert brought the same zeal, energy, and kindness which had marked his University career." His published works were limited to charges, sermons, and pamphlets; and no authorised life of him has been written. His blind daughter, Elizabeth Margarett Maria, did a great work for the blind; having been mainly influential in founding the Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Blind. Mrs. Baird Smith has written me a letter on the subject, which I am glad to introduce here :—

"81 LEXHAM GARDENS, KENSINGTON, W., *August 4, 1890.*

"MY DEAR DR. JAPP,—As I have somewhat insisted upon the special stress my father laid upon his claim to careful and exact statement of particulars when speaking of events in his life, I may mention one (among other most valuable ones observed by yourself) undesigned confirmation of his exactitude. I have been trying to find, but as yet without success, the place where he mentions in his works, that, of his two schoolmates in the first form at the Manchester Grammar-School, the one became a bishop, the other was hanged for sheep-stealing; so at least he had heard in later years. So far as our poor friend the sheep-stealer is concerned, I cannot be sorry we have had no confirmation of the report of that catastrophe. But some few years after my father's death we had a most pleasing confirmation of the other part of the account, in making the

greatly prized friendship of the daughter of this very schoolfellow, the Bishop. At her house we met the delightful and gracious old man himself, who had remembered my father with life-long regard and interest. My father's enduring regard for his schoolfellow, the young G—— of the 'Confessions' is 'writ large' in his remembrances of the Manchester Grammar-School. I had not thought of this hitherto as a corroboration of any statement of my father's. None such was needed by us. I had regarded it solely as one of those beautiful incidents in life's experience, precious alike to the heart and to the imagination. I hate to use it for a more vulgar purpose, but recent events seem to demand it.—Yours always sincerely,

“FLORENCE BAIRD SMITH.”

CHAPTER VI.

HIS MOTHER'S LETTERS TO HIM AT MANCHESTER.

HIS mother, after she really became aware of his illness and discontent, it is evident enough, was eager to do for him all that she felt was consistent with what she regarded as dutiful obedience on his part; and her letters written to him after he had threatened to leave the school are as remarkable for their earnestness as for the clear and graceful language in which they are written. The first indicates the difficulties of travel in these days—for she is arranging for Thomas to spend a holiday with her in Liverpool, where she then was:—

I.

“LIVERPOOL, *May* 20, 1801.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I am much afraid of any mistakes being made in your getting to me, therefore send you laid down in black and white your steering chart; and this being the language of the place we are in, I beg you will think it very appropriate.

“You will leave Manchester on Saturday morning in the canal-boat, first of all informing yourselves

whether there is a boat sailing upon a *Saturday morning*, of which I have great doubts; almost a certainty, indeed, that Saturday morning is the only one in the week it does not go. You will be landed about a mile from Warrington London Bridge, where you will meet coaches, into one of which you will get and go to Warrington to dinner; and you must secure your places in the Long Coach to Liverpool, which (with all the Manchester coaches) comes to the Angel Inn, Dale Street. Should my suspicion about the boat be right, you must come directly from Manchester in the Long Coach in the morning of Saturday;—lose no time as soon as you can on Thursday to know all this, and let your place be arranged.

“Whichever way you come, I beg your principal care may be given to Henry, who is so blind he cannot see a horse till it is close to his elbow, and so frightened when he does see it, that he loses the power of moving. In the variety of plans it is possible William may not happen to meet you; I shall, however, endeavour to send him to the right place and hour; if you miss him, get a porter to call you a coach and drive to Everton, to Mrs. Best’s cottage; it is on the middle road, opposite Mr. Clarke’s the banker. I must repeat, do not let Henry go from you a moment, and let Pink mind the luggage. Keep Henry from leaning against the coach-door or over the edge of the boat.

“You need bring no books, for Mr. Clarke, our neighbour, will lend you any Greek or Latin author.

Of Italian, French, and English books he seems to have store also; and in the town there is really a noble library, to which Mr. Cragg will introduce you. It is a new institution, comprising a great collection. The room is a fine one, and occupies the upper floor of a handsome building. The lower floor is a public news-room. I am persuaded you will like this place, and our sweet cottage, which has a delightful view of the water; the bathing is not so near as might be wished, but within the compass of a walk.

“Mary has had a letter from Lady Carbery with a bad account of her health; she is going to London for advice. Mrs. Brotherton¹ is alive, and for the present somewhat better.

“Last night, as we were returning from Liverpool about nine o'clock, a gentleman on the road, who was observing the heavens through a glass, invited us to look at the planet Saturn, which we saw with his belt very finely. You know this planet is very seldom seen, sometimes not for many years, but at this time it is visible, and, it is said, Mars also. You may see Saturn to the left of the moon with the naked eye, I suppose, to-morrow night; but whether at the same hour in the same position I don't know; I should think farther to the left. You cannot see the belt of Saturn without a glass.

“I am reading Dr. Currie's ‘Life of Burns,’ not without a sharply jealous eye to the Doctor's Jacobinism.

¹ An aunt of De Quincey's mother.

"Alas, my dear Thomas, for the fate of that brave man, General Abercrombie!¹

"Mary's love. Jane has gone to see the bathing-house with William.—Yours ever most affectionately,
E. DE QUINCEY.

"*P.S.*—I see nine sail of ships where I sit, and have never before counted so small a number. You must expect to see us in an Irish cabin, or very little better; when you approach the cottage, you may reach the chimneys with your hat. I have had three applications for Green Park Buildings. We have a piano lent us; books as many as we want; and all the vegetables we use are given by Mr. Clarke,² and have half our furniture from Mr. Cragg's house. I now find there are coaches to other houses besides the Angel, so the hazard of meeting you is greatly increased.

"MASTER T. DE QUINCEY,

"At Mr. Lawson's, Millgate, Manchester."

¹ General Abercrombie. Sir Ralph Abercrombie was born in 1734 at Menstry, near Tullibody, Scotland; was educated for the law, but disliking it, a coronetcy in the 3rd Dragoon Guards was found for him. He soon showed such art for military service that he rose rapidly, and was in many engagements. In 1799 he was sent to command the troops in Ireland, but disagreeing with the officials of Dublin Castle, he resigned his command, and was then sent to command the first division in a descent on Holland, in which he was very successful; did great service in Egypt in 1800-1, along with Sir John Moore, with whom he shares the "honour of renewing the ancient discipline and military reputation of the British soldier." He was severely wounded in the celebrated action against General Merion on the 2nd March 1801, and died from his wounds on the 28th of that month.

² Mr. Clarke was the gentleman with whom, as De Quincey tells in his Sketches, he read Greek.

II.

“HIGH WYCOMBE, *August 29, 1801.*

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I think you will be surprised at hearing nothing of our proceedings, as I am uneasy to know how you and the dear boys are. I wrote to Mrs. Kelsall from Oxford, and gave her time to answer me there, and I hoped to have heard from her all I was anxiously interested about. I am unable to conceive why she did not write a few lines, though I *can* suppose her mother's illness prevented her saying much. When I wrote that letter, having been quite unsuccessful in my pursuit, I intended returning by the road I came, but received a letter from this place with a very fine description of the houses, so I returned to see them, and, to add to my perplexing and, in many ways, embarrassing chase after a house, went to London to treat with a person acting under a will, who alone could fix any terms. This all ended in total disappointment, and I came back last Saturday, meaning to begin my retrograde march on Monday, when poor Jane was seized with the scarlet fever, which is very prevalent, and in many instances fatal, in this place at present. She has been very ill, and has had the complaint completely, but has been spared the whole train of dreadful symptoms; she has had no delirium, and her sore throat has been moderate. I am happy and thankful to assure you she is pronounced this day free from fever, and has been out in the air, though very weak

still, and suffering a good deal from pain and swelling in her wrist, which our doctor says has been a very common conclusion to the complaint in a great proportion of the cases he has attended; he had told me of it before it appeared.

“In this dismaying state of things, I have had great consolation in having this very clever and good man to consult, who has treated Jane, I think, very judiciously, and has taken the interest of a friend in our affairs, being himself the friend of Wm. Nez, through whom he knew us long ago. During the confinement and unwilling detention I have heard of two or three houses, but whether I shall turn aside to look at them I am far from sure, or whether I shall hear of any more likely, still less sure. I shall not, on Jane’s account, be able to set off before Tuesday at the earliest, so that unless there is some urgent occasion for your writing I would not have you venture a letter; *yet if there is any special cause why you should write, by all means do so.* Direct to me at the Post-Office; it may be I shall not leave the town till nearer the end of the week, and if I should I will provide for the letter being sent after me.

“I have very fortunately got private lodgings, and a good nurse; I have never permitted Mary to go near Jane lest she should take the fever, and having had it myself had no fear, as it can be had but once. Everything I have undertaken in this business of house-hunting has failed; every person I have attempted to see I have missed, and every direction I have received either as to the

country or persons residing in it has led me into mistakes.

“I do not feel very courageously disposed to prosecute the inquiry, yet I must have a house, and do not know by what means to get one. Exertion seems not to serve my purpose, so I think I shall wait quietly either at Chester, Liverpool, or Manchester, and see whether a house will come to me!

“Our sensible, pleasant friend and physician, Mr. Slater, has lent me Mr. Faber’s book, *Horæ Mosaicæ*¹—being the substance of eight Bampton Lectures. I knew something of Mr. Faber long since by name; perhaps you may remember his being once or twice at Mr. Pratt’s for a day. That he was a scholar I well knew, but he seems much more than that in his writings—such a man as I should wish you to know better than most men in the University. I mean to buy the book, and, if you please, you may get it for me at Clarke’s and read it.

¹ George Stanley Faber, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, wrote largely on theology, Christian evidences, prophecy and prophetic interpretation, on the difficulties of Romanism, and kindred subjects; his works forming a long list, filling five columns of the British Museum Catalogue. He was often controversial and quite pre-scientific in style. The full title of the work referred to above was “*Horæ Mosaicæ*; or, A View of the Mosaic Records with respect to their Coincidences with Profane Antiquity; their Internal Credibility and their Connection with Christianity”—a work of wide research and learning for the date at which it was written. The first edition was published at Oxford in 1801, but a second and largely augmented edition was published in London in 1818. He was born in 1773, and died January 27, 1854. He was an uncle of the more famous Wm. F. Faber, the distinguished preacher, poet, and hymn-writer, who went over to the Church of Rome, and did such service for it in England. Uncle and nephew were born in the same house—Calverley Vicarage, Yorkshire.

"This town is beautifully situated amidst surrounding hills, with fine woods, but I find the common disease of a small town, tale-bearing, the universal endemic of Wycombe.

"I have not seen above three newspapers since I left Lancashire ; I have been repeatedly told that Hannah More is married, but can scarcely believe it. I had a letter on Monday from Mr. Pratt, who does not believe it, and adds to this some proof that the report was unfounded ; but on reflection I believe it proves nothing, or if anything, that she is, to his great surprise as well as mine.

"Mary is quite well, but most grievously tired of our vagrant life. I believe we should both be glad to find ourselves in Manchester ; she feels reluctance to returning only for fear of our being laughed at as unsuccessful adventurers. Adieu, my dear, very dear Thomas.—Believe me your ever-affectionate mother,

E. DE QUINCEY."

Previous to the date of the next letter Mrs. de Quincey had bought The Priory, Chester, which her son has made so familiar to us in the "Autobiographic Sketches ;" but it wanted additions ; hence the need for temporary lodgings :—

III.

"MY DEAR THOMAS,—I have two letters of yours in my desk, but not easy to find, and I cannot answer,

but I will write to tell you I purpose being in Manchester on Thursday evening to tea, and would not, if I could, anticipate the pleasure (if Mr. Kelsall¹ has not exhausted it) of describing The Priory. I hope you will like it both in reality and in our painting, should we one day try it on canvas. As soon as you *can after receiving this*, pray go to Mrs. Kelsall, and as it will be Tuesday afternoon, you can help her, and with my love to her, beg she will get us lodgings as near her as she can ;—a drawing-room, one bedroom, if a small one and a small bed, but with a fireplace in the room, will do for me ; another chamber with a bed large enough for Mary and Jane (Mary does *not go* to Laxton), a den for William, and another for a woman-servant, which I must get directly. We can do very well without a dining-room, at least for the present. I do hope such lodgings will be had, as I cannot stay here beyond Monday morning without entering upon another week. I mean to drink tea in Faulkner Street if I can send off my goods and chattels to the lodgings, where William may settle himself alone.

“I am sorry to hear the poor boys were not permitted to see the show. What could be the reason Mr. L. did not indulge them ?

“I remember you mentioned something about cravats, which I never answered, nor can I now, but by begging you will either get Mrs. Kelsall to try

¹ Mr. Kelsall, the successor of De Quincey's father in the business in Manchester, in whose hands still lay some of the family fortune.

what is proper, and we will make them immediately when we come, or get them made, as you like.

“Surely you must be mistaken about Mrs. Hall being rude; cross likely enough; but if she meant any rudeness she must have laboured under some belief that she had received a rudeness from me or you, for it is certainly usual for her to reserve her incivilities for home, and to be remarkably attentive to her visitors.

“So poor Mrs. Schreiber is at last released. I had a letter this morning from Lady Carbery, who seems, and says she is, as much surprised and shocked by the awful event as though no warning had been given. She was buried yesterday at Tixover Church. Lady C. speaks with more feeling than I ever remember in her before, and Lord C. —poor fellow! who has not much credit in the world—not only writes, but I believe has acted towards Mrs. Schreiber with most disinterested tenderness, and has laid up nothing to disturb his conscience throughout her long illness as far as she was concerned.

“I shall write almost immediately for the poor little dog Tixey, as I promised its mistress to take her.

“I am ashamed to tell you that this imperial city, so polished and so proud, as it is called, has a most magnanimous bull-baiting through its streets this day; four poor animals have been torn to pieces for the entertainment of *gentlemen*.

“Tell Mrs. Kelsall that poor little Tom is a

fine fellow in his new clothes, and the happiest of boys.

“Mary and Jane joining in true love to you, believe me, my dearest Thomas, ever your affectionate,
E. DE QUINCEY.

“Let us see your face when we arrive.

“Mr. T. DE QUINCEY,

“Mr. Lawson's, Long Millgate, Manchester.”

IV.

“CHESTER, *February* 18, 1802.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I expected to have received a letter from you by the servants, or this day's post, to explain your motives for the surprising purpose you disclosed to me on Tuesday morning. As you have not written, I feel myself really constrained to inquire a little further into an affair which certainly, at the time, filled me with amazement and anguish. Perhaps your full design, had I known it, might have lessened some of the pain which your communication, so suddenly and partially made, sent me suffering away with.

“I mean here to expostulate with you, and should be glad that you would not reject and dislike my opinions merely because they do not accord with yours. I must repeat again what I believe is true, that you cannot be admitted to the University till you are eighteen (that, however, may easily be known); you may enter your name on the books when you

are sixteen, and there is some advantage in doing so. This I am pretty sure Charles Cowper did; and though, like you, he wished to have gone at an early age, he did not, because, as I believe, he could not.

“Supposing this to be the case, is it possible you can wish to loiter away two years at home? Surely Mr. Lawson’s school may afford you better opportunities for study than you could have in any other family! I would urge you to consider that the language you use when you say ‘I must’ or ‘I will’ is absolute disobedience to your father’s last and most solemn act, which appoints you to submit to the direction of your guardians, to Mr. Hall and myself in particular, in what regards your education. I cannot think you believe a total revolt from our rule will make you in any sense great if you have not the constituents of greatness in you, or that waiting the common course of time and expediency will at all hinder the maturity of your powers, if you have them.

“What to say to you on the subject of pecuniary advantages I scarcely know, since you are so unhappy as to think £100 a year added to your own fortune despicable, and that the honourable competition with your equals for the reward of literary superiority is a degradation. Were I to fix upon the most independent mode of obtaining such a sum, I am sure I should be very apt to name those very academic prizes; so much do you and I differ: however, to make you easy on this head, I can tell you I am well assured you are not qualified by your

own circumstances to try for them. My dear son, let me conjure you (though I might justly use a different tone) to ask yourself whether it is any part or any mark of greatness to feel solicitous to be thought what you are not. It is common enough for mean and little minds to court the opinion of fools by false pretences; but if you ever arrive at higher distinction, your birth and your fortune can have no share in your elevation; you have nothing to boast of or to blush for in either. I hope and pray that your heart is not familiar with more serious errors, which I am sure anything like the wish to renounce a living parent's authority, strengthened as mine is by your father's delegated command to devote myself to watch over you in all things; indeed, my dear child, a deliberate design to revolt, *must* be unblest. I can meantime say no more, or may lose the post, which I am most anxious to catch.—Your most affectionate mother,

“E. DE QUINCEY.”

V.

“CHESTER, *March 4, 1802.*

“MY DEAREST THOMAS,—I hoped to have heard from you before this time, both because I requested it, and because you said it was your intention to explain yourself when we parted. I believe it is natural, and I ought to prepare myself to find you thinking me not your friend because I cannot fall into your views; but this mistake, or any unfortunate

effect which in a calculation of possibilities may follow my endeavours to guide you, shall never make me shrink or temporise in a plain decided important duty to you. I have an awful account to give as a parent; my charge is one of the talents I must render up with improvement, or meet the just punishment of its neglect or abuse. I look back upon much that might have been better done, and upon much imperfection in all; but the shortness of human foresight I cannot help. Now that I see you threatened with uncommon danger I must endeavour to help you, though I may err in the means, or you may defeat them; my tenderness shall follow you through every change and period of life; if the world forsakes you (a probable thing, though not in the catalogue of your present expectations), I cannot. The unceasing love of a mother is figuratively used, as the most immutable of human things, to express the absolute unchangeableness of God to His children. I said most truly in my last letter that I did not mean to influence your determination as to your future life: in this letter I purpose faithfully to point out to you where you are departing from the rectitude of your first principles, and to show you that no scheme, no aim, no destination under the sun, can ultimately be good which grows out of a dreadful fallacy. At some period of your life you must be convinced, either to your dismay or advantage, that every human being is brought upon this stage of existence for the great purposes of glorifying God above all, and of doing good, and preparing for his

own permanent happiness. Whatever is not pursued as means to these ends, or in subordination to them, is unhallowed; what opposes them must finally be unsuccessful. The Word of God declares all this, and experience fully confirms it; these are guides which I trust neither your heart nor your understanding are prepared coldly to reject. Nor need you take alarm as though the Gospel required the renunciation of any one talent; your Heavenly Father has given you *many* talents, and He requires the best *use* of them, not their extirpation or neglect; but it is awfully true that responsibility rises in exact proportion to their number and magnitude. The greatest and best men, from this consciousness, are kept humble, while others unacquainted or feebly impressed with this truth are puffed up, and are pursuing their own glory in all they do, which is the very essence of all that is contrary to God; it is the spirit of heathenism; and if any one temper of mind may singly be put to denote the whole anti-Christian character, it is self-glory; and its monstrous adjuncts are independence and pride, which cast angels from heaven, where such tempers are no more admissible now than then.

“Now, my dearest son, *these are truths*. I hope, too, you do not even wish they were not so; your reason must of course acknowledge *that* education which does not take these truths into its account must be a bad one; and I shall find no difficulty in admitting much to be wrong in every human system, precisely because the great designs of God, as

developed to us in the Gospel, are more or less counteracted in all. I know what your ideas are, at least in a considerable measure, and I fear they are not nearer the true mark. I plainly perceive that you have exalted one, and that the most dangerous faculty of the mind, the imagination, over all the rest; but it will desolate your life and hopes, if it be not restrained and brought under religious government; it may then be turned to the use it was assuredly given for, in the pursuit of any profession, and be nobly used in the service of your Maker. In a worldly sense, without you bring this busy, restless power into submission to reason and judgment, you are undone; you are now carried away, wholly blinded by the bewildering light of your fancy, and that you may never see clearer, your reading is all of a sort to weaken your mental optics!

“As your parent, my very dear child, I solemnly request, I command you, in the name of that God whom you must serve or lose, that you do conscientiously read every day at least a chapter in the Gospels or Epistles; there you will learn, at any rate you *may* learn, to know yourself, your end, your duty. Ask of God humbly to enlighten your understanding to receive the truths of His Word. Let your daily reading be the works of men who were neither infidels nor Jacobins; read history; it will show you the corruption of human nature and the overruling power and providence of God. I ask all this, dear, dear Thomas, deeply interested in your compliance; and though eighteen or twenty

months given to me thus may now seem a great sacrifice, believe me, in future years, if no other good come of it, you will know the sweetness of such an act of obedience to be more consolatory than the world's best praise.

"I hope to hear from you ; give me your confidence ; you may surely believe that I wish only your true good for ever. I have the practical seconding of experience all at your service, wanting that the whole costume of life's picture is distorted in your view. God bless you, my son. Adieu.—Ever your truly affectionate mother,

"E. DE QUINCEY.

"Mr. T. DE QUINCEY,

"Mr. Lawson's, Millgate, Manchester."

VI.

"CHESTER, April 12, 1802.

"MY DEAR THOMAS,—I wrote you a long letter several weeks ago, in which I think there was some reason, and some exercise of a parent's authority ; to both of these, as well as other parts of my letter, I expected attention, but you have given them none ; and I see no use in repeating the same things, or all the new ones in the world, if you only say the old one, that you are miserable. I think it behoved you to show, not only *why* you should leave Mr. Lawson's, but *where* you can go, and *how* you can employ your time to *better* advantage. You say 'that a full and fair answer to your questions will

bring me over to your wishes.' I am sure I can find no such answer. I ask you for it, and shall willingly and candidly listen to all that you can say. You have mentioned, though not proposed, coming home, under some idea of being useful, but I am at a loss to guess whether you mean to me or to yourself; you seem to be trifling on a serious occasion. The school must be bad indeed, and in a manner unknown to me, if it is not (with the advantage you possess) much better than wasting time in this town, where there is no access to books, and perhaps no literature either in the heads or on the shelves of the gentlemen. Of this I cannot, however, be certain; but I am well assured a year spent at home in desultory reading, without an object, is an evil of such incalculable extent, that I shall never consent to it, except to avoid something very dreadful to be escaped in no other way.

"You have urged your misery, and you will urge it again; but cannot you tell me what it is. Surely misery that is real must have a name, and I solemnly pledge myself to remedy any *real* grievance you endure as far as I can; but to attempt the cure of evils I do not know, to accede to reasons without hearing them, and to comply with *unsettled* schemes are things neither reasonable nor practicable. If there is any friend of mine you would prefer explaining yourself to, I have nothing to say against the intervention of such a third person; indeed, without I see good reason, as in the case of Richard and Henry, for removing you, I *must* call upon

Mr. Hall, at least to let him know that the measure is not mine. If I do see sufficient cause for your leaving Mr. Lawson when I know your reasons, I shall not hesitate to remove you ;—more than this I cannot say.

“ On looking again at your letter I see nothing to console me ; you let nothing fasten on your mind but this one present object of leaving school. Must I suppose that, like a child, you attach magnitude to trifles, and use words out of all proportion to things, or that there is something behind which is yet to be revealed but too applicable to terms of misery ? I hope this last is not the case, as you must be aware it is in vain to talk at a distance of such things, and I should suppose you would have been less ambiguous. I wish you as well as you can wish yourself ; unfortunately we have very different views of the means. I am sure that the happiness you look for out of the path of duty *must* elude your grasp. Consider, my dear Thomas ; if, when I have heard both your reasoning and your wishes, I cannot fall into your plans, what must be done ? Must you govern me or must I govern you ? If there are sixteen or eighteen months about which we differ, I must assure you it is *not much* to sacrifice, even *wholly* to sacrifice, so much time in return for the nights and days and years of solicitude, and the thousand sacrifices I have made for you : this is supposing you have only your mere fancy or unsupported judgment to guide your desires. I have said before I will listen to solid reasons, and you shall

ever find me willing to support every assurance of being your sincere and affectionate mother,

“E. QUINCEY.

“Mr. T. QUINCEY,

“At Mr. Lawson's School, Manchester.”

In reply to this letter De Quincey reiterated the sources of his misery—want of exercise, depression, and utter lack of any variety in the school-life, and thus concluded :—

VII.

“The most important of the three advantages which could possibly be mentioned in support of your first argument would be no advantage to me—even though my present opinion were entirely changed; for, as to *ancient* books, very few persons read more of them than what they buy; and as to *modern* ones, I think even you yourself will admit that those in our library furnish as much literary food as, if properly digested, would serve for the year I should stay at home.

“I now pass on to the second argument, that, ‘besides promoting the attainment of learning, it possesses also the means of rewarding it.’

“The school allowance and the college exhibition I object to, in my case, on two accounts;—first, as they are degrading; secondly, as they are useless. On the first point I will not enlarge,¹ because it

¹ I will observe, however, *en passant*, that on this point Mr. Kelsall thinks entirely with me.”

would give you pain; on the second I *need* not enlarge, because its truth may be decided by appealing to a matter of fact—the extent of my fortune: I believe that it is large enough to support me at college.

“This is my answer to your two positive arguments for my remaining at school, and I now proceed to answer your three negative ones.

“I have said already that this school has no tendency to make me diligent, and it meets your first negative argument when I say that it has no tendency to make me even *not idle*. The truth is, that no situation could give me more opportunity of being idle, nor more desire of using that opportunity. This, to be sure, is a mere assertion; but then—as the proof of that assertion rests upon facts, and those facts, again, rest on my assertion—it would be in vain for me to attempt at any further discussion of the argument: I proceed therefore to the next.

“The objection to my leaving school, if you really do entertain it, I cannot tell how to answer; indeed it admits of none but a practical answer. However, I will just hint that the cause of any disputes which we have formerly had, if you augur from them, will then be removed.

“The third and last negative advantage attached to my remaining at school—‘that it will keep me from unrestrained liberty’—I suspect to have more weight with you than all the rest put together; and yet perhaps it is the one which, of all the

others, is most palpably specious. At Mr. Lawson's, it is true, there is a form of restraint kept up, and only a *form*; for the restraint itself is what any person may elude! I could prove this to you from many instances of the most unbridled licentiousness which have fallen under my observation. But I will observe in general that here I have no motive for resisting the temptation to enjoy that unrestrained liberty which is continually offered to me;—*at home*, while I retained my shame, I should at least have one motive for curbing my passion.

“I have thus endeavoured to answer, as fully as my time will admit, your different arguments for keeping me at school. ‘The preserving me from profligacy,’ which is the conclusion I have made you draw from the three negative advantages of my staying at Mr. Lawson's, would be the probable, though not the certain, consequences of these advantages, if realised. The general result of all the arguments—that remaining at this school will essentially promote my happiness—must certainly fall, if the arguments that gave it birth fall but it does not so entirely follow that if these arguments stand, this conclusion must stand also. Nay, I will undertake to prove that even though these arguments could stand, yet the conclusion could *not* stand; for that I should certainly be miserable.”

It is evident enough that De Quincey's determination to leave the Manchester Grammar-School

was not due to any lack of appeals to his vanity. Even Mr. Lawson, who seldom gave praise, paid him compliments. On that memorable celebration of the Christmas breaking-up which he has spoken of in his Autobiographic Sketch headed "At Manchester School," much honour was done to him for his part in the proceedings—the recitation of a Latin poem on the recent conquest of Malta—*Melite Britannia subacta*. Lady Carbery smiled upon him, and, as he tells, she had brought in her train every person of rank or influence she could prevail upon to go. Among his papers we have found a more detailed record of the stars of her following than he allowed to pass into print:—

"Lady Carbery, ever intent upon doing me honour, had come down with all the splendours of equipage that she could muster, and surrounded by all the friends—old friends or new friends—that she could influence. Whoever it was on that day that failed to be happy, the head-master—the *archididasculus*—was not the man. To the seventh of the heavens he was elevated by the pomps and vanities of this wicked world which invested and took by storm the ancient school. Three lords at the very least there were, viz., Lord Massey with his brother and his lovely wife on *my* account, Lord Grey de Wilton as an old *alumnus* of the school, and Lord Belgrave as his son-in-law. Many others of distinction glorified the hour for *him*; and all Millgate came forth to witness his glory."

And then he goes on:—

“I had but some eighteen months to serve. Oh, wherefore could I not have been wiser? Wherefore did I not hear that secret whisper of monitorial wisdom, that even thou wert sighing over the evil choice which I made? Wherefore was it that to thee I should so obstinately have been deaf? For my powers of long-suffering were great : and the burden that oppressed me I *could* have borne—had I not suffered at that very time under the falsest medical advice. There is no misery which cannot be simulated by a deranged liver; and for me at that time this curse existed under a double agency, viz., want of exercise in the first place; and secondly, medical counsel the most extravagantly erring that in this erring world I have ever known.”

VIII.

“CHESTER, June 2, 1802.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I have this morning your letter. Being a week beyond the time I appointed for your writing, I had of course written to Mr. Hall on the subject. I will not enter into argument with you; it is sufficient to say that the necessity for this affair being settled before you come home is more than ever apparent from your letter; and the unhappiness, to me at least, from your living with me is no less apparent, because we have very few sentiments of union between us; and the whole task of suppressing opposing ones would fall on me. In saying this I am not becoming a stickler for esta-

blished systems as though they were perfect ones, but then good may and often has been obtained under them. Were they *more* perfect you might, as you now own to be the case, determine to reject that good, and your missing it would be, as it is now, your own fault. I do not know what your system is; enough to tell you all I think of it; but I *dare* promise you hereafter as sovereign a contempt for your present crude opinions as you now feel for other people's—these opinions of yours at sixteen have probably been suggested, certainly swelled into importance, by the advocates for early emancipation and other preposterous theories.

“Of that love, my dear Thomas, which alike despises my commands and my expostulations, you have yourself foreseen my distrust. I know full well what true love is, and when you tell me that my warm desire for a thing has strengthened your hatred to it, I know this sentiment grows out of something else than love. It must, however, be owned that all you promise from this sort of love is only to read sometimes what you dislike and have the ingenuity to read as though you read not, on condition that I relinquish both my reason and comfort.

“I have said this much to show you I cannot see the force of your arguments, not with a view to combat them; I might as well engage Don Quichotte's windmills.

“I have said, and I say again, that any compromise which Mr. Hall may adjust for your satisfaction I will agree to. Your illness I sincerely lament, and

with tenfold concern because it is produced by your sick mind, which no earthly physician can cure.

“Your brothers do not come home till late in the month, therefore I cannot let you have a chaise from Manchester; but if you punctually let me know the day you and Jane come, I will send a chaise to the boat to meet you. I will say one thing more to prevent any further ideas about Richard and Henry coming home before their time; it is, that I will, to the best of my power, keep them from the mischief and misery of hearing your present sentiments; and unless I can have some reasonable certainty that they will not even for the short time you will be together, I will not let them come home at all: it is sufficiently terrible to those affected by such opinions—that is, you and me—without two more poor children being tormented themselves or tormenting me with demanding unnatural liberty.

“I cannot help it, my dear, unhappy child, if these expressions excite your hatred; I am sure nothing but agreement with you is likely to do otherwise. I am equally sure they arise from the best exercise of my understanding, in a humble dependence on Divine direction, which has long ago brought me to know that the human mind is as much in ruins as its will. I shall never cease to pray for you, and never cease to love you most truly, as I do at this moment when my affection is called to a very painful effort.—Yours ever, dearest T. Q.,

“E. QUINCEY.

“Mary is well.”

IX.

"PRIORY, *June 6, 1802.*

"MY DEAR THOMAS,—I should have written on Saturday, but was laid up with the headache ; and I should have answered your former letter, but I could not tell then, any more than now, what to say to it. As you refuse to communicate your views to me, I should have had only to consider whether, under such an extraordinary resolution on your part, I ought to be bound to a promise which was made with hopes of serving you in some just and honourable design, however visionary it might appear to me. But you seem to speak doubtfully of your own wishes to go to college. If you then think your views, whatever they are, may be better served than by going thither, why will you let me give myself the trouble of entering you there, when probably you may quit the situation with the same dissatisfaction you have manifested in every other situation, with the additional inconvenience of giving publicity to your unsteadiness ? I will produce the £100 a year, and as I am ashamed of your still continuing your stay as a visitor to Mr. Cragg, I can only advise you to determine upon some scheme. I have so many applications for The Priory (which I am obliged to sell) that I have hopes of soon leaving it, and it would certainly be some comfort to me to think you were settled first. I will say no more, but, since you refuse to unfold yourself, ask what will best suit your views, within the compass of the

£100 a year? Let your communication be directly made. The enclosed £7, you will pay Mrs. Best £6, 13s. 10d. out of. Mary is far from well; I cannot say but I fear she is in some, though not immediate, danger.—All here join in remembrance and good wishes with your affectionate mother,

“E. QUINCEY.

“*P.S.*—The war, which is unavoidable, is for our existence, and we are prepared for great sacrifices. Those who have either prudence or patriotism will meet the calls of Government by cheerfully reducing themselves into small compass at first.

“There is a family in whose house I lodged at Oxford where I suppose you might lodge too; they are very good kind of people. I imagine also they would board you. This, however, I do not know. Their name is Bellinge, and they are grocers opposite Christ Church.

“Take Mrs. Best's receipt and send it when you write.

“Dr. Currie has called within this hour, and says that in a letter this morning from Mrs. Brook, just landed at Dover, she says she has left her husband, who is detained by the *insanity* of Bonaparte; her manner seems to give the idea of his being *generally* thought mad.¹

“Mr. T. QUINCEY,

“Care of Mr. Cragg, Merchant, Liverpool.”

¹ Napoleon's detentions and banishments were of so arbitrary a character, as seen in his banishment of Madame de Staël and his

X.

“PRIORY, *July 18, 1802.*

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I write just to inform you that your uncle is in England. Beside the letter forwarded by Mr. Kelsall, which was written last January, and from the place of his departure, I received one from St. Helena, and another from the Downs, through the hands of Mr. Pratt at Bath, from which my brother wrote that by chance he might not miss me. He is obliged to go to town, and expressed a wish for me to meet him, which I shall certainly do if he continues to desire and believes he may be detained. When he comes here I shall write to you, as I would have you come for a week to see so dear a stranger. Tell the Kelsalls and Halls this news, and let Mr. K. know I have his letter this morning. Your small trunk surely will be enough for your short visit.—Believe me, dear boy, your ever-affectionate

E. Q.

“I wrote to my brother yesterday.”

This letter, however, did not reach De Quincey for some time after; so that when he speaks as though he first learned that his uncle, Colonel Penson, had reached The Priory when he arrived there, his statement seems to be well founded.

Mr Saintsbury, in his article in *Macmillan's*

detention of Mr. Brook, that it is no wonder those more directly concerned were inclined to think him mad.

Magazine, falls into an error when he writes : “ That he did go to Manchester, and that *he did, after rather more than two years of his three years’ probation*, run away, is, I suppose, indisputable.” De Quincey tells with iteration that he had only served fully more than one-half of the whole time when he ran away ; that is, something over eighteen months, and certainly not “ *rather more than two years*,” as Mr. Saintsbury says.

It is to be feared that Mr. Saintsbury allowed himself to be guided by an erring “ *Encyclopædia* ” instead of by his author and his author’s life ; for De Quincey himself has a very memorable passage which embodies the fact, and which, once read, could hardly be forgotten : “ O reader, urge not the crying arguments that spoke so tumultuously against me. Too sorrowfully I feel them ; but of thirty-six months’ residence I had actually completed nineteen ; *i.e.*, the better half ” (“ *Confessions*,” latest form, Author’s Collective Edition, p. 88).

CHAPTER VII.

HIS WANDERINGS IN WALES AND LONDON.

DE QUINCEY, in the letter signed "X. Y. Z." in the *London Magazine*, in which he replies to Mr. James Montgomery and others who had expressed a doubt whether the "Confessions" were mere fiction, or partly true and partly fiction, answered that they were true, though not the whole truth. The contemporary letters in our hands prove that this was correct. It is not to be expected that when he had cut himself off from home and guardians he should hear much from them, though it is evident that arrangements had been made whereby, so long as he was in Wales, letters might reach him through the medium of his friend, Mrs. Best, at Liverpool, to whom it is almost certain that he communicated his address even in London. Through Mr. Best, in January 1803, he had ventured to address a proposition for returning to his guardian, Mr. Hall; but Mr. Hall's reply, which would reach him within a couple of months after the last letter from Lord Sligo, is in such a tone that it is hardly to be wondered that nothing came of it. This is the letter:—

I.

“MANCHESTER, *January 7, 1803.*

“SIR,—As you have thought proper to revolt from your duty on a point of the utmost importance to your present interest and future welfare—as you have hitherto persisted in rejecting the wishes of your guardians, who could be governed by no motives but those of promoting your real benefit, you cannot be surprised to hear that they have no new proposition to make. But, notwithstanding all that has passed, if you have any plans in agitation that seem entitled to notice, they are willing to pay them every degree of consideration.

“They trust that by this time you are convinced that it was (to speak the least of it) a rash step for a young man of seventeen to throw himself out of the protection of his friends and relations into the wide world, and to have nothing to trust to but the charity or compassion of strangers; and they still cherish the hope that you will renounce your errors, and endeavour to remove the impression of former misconduct by correct and proper behaviour for the future.—I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

“SAMUEL HALL.”

A very good letter for a commonplace man to an ordinary, commonplace boy, caught in a fault for which discipline was the proper punishment, but hardly, it will surely be admitted, the kind of missive

to have the effect of conciliation on the mind of a youth like De Quincey.

Even after a kind of reconciliation had been effected with his guardians, he did not directly return to The Priory, Chester, but went for a short time to the house of Mrs. Best in Liverpool. This is proved by the two letters which follow from his mother. Probably this course had been decided on till some definite idea as to his future had been settled between his mother and Mr. Hall, or it may have been due to the presence of his younger brothers at home, between whom and Thomas his mother had resolved that there should be no communication whilst any of the taint of rebellion remained upon him.

II.

“PRIORY, *April 22, 1803.*

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—I have sent you a £5 bill for the discharge of Mrs. Best’s acct. Give it to her, and desire at the end of another week to have an exact statement of what the whole comes to, and I will send what will be deficient. I find so little reason to think, upon inquiry, that you would find the sort of accommodation I mentioned at Oxford, that I no longer turn my thoughts that way, and I get no letters from anybody on the subject. What do you think of presenting yourself to Mr. Hall in person, and trying whether you cannot prevail on him to give up his purpose of withholding his per-

mission to your entering at Oxford, fairly, telling him (as you may) that I have done my utmost to get you a place? If you think this worth trying let me know, and I will write to Mr. Kelsall to get you lodgings. I need not tell you that in order to have a chance of success you must treat him with respect. I find writing so useless that I have given it up. Write immediately, that you may have my answer and arrangements by the time you have finished your fifth week with Mrs. Best. We are all tolerable. —With love from all the party, I am, my dear son, yours ever,

E. QUINCEY.

“If you go to Manchester you must tell Mr. Hall that I am so very unhappy at your present mode of idling away life, that if he will not make the additional allowance I will. In the meantime you must find out what you can live upon on the most frugal footing. I have been assured that numbers contrive to make £100 a year procure all the necessities of life: if that can be done you must do without any great addition to what I now have allowed.

“I think Mary a great deal better. Don’t forget to pay Mr. Cragg postage.

“MR. T. DE QUINCEY,

“At Mr. Cragg’s, Merct., Liverpool.”

In compliance with the urgent requests, almost entreaties, of his mother and Mr. Kelsall, De Quincey at last consented to write to Mr. Hall in a conciliatory and apologetic spirit, and the following is his letter :—

III.

“EVERTON, *June 23, 1803.*

“SIR,—I learned from Mr. Kelsall when he was last in Liverpool that, on my pledging myself to enter into a profession, my mother’s scheme of sending me to college would receive your sanction ; I mentioned this, a few days ago, in a letter to my mother, and yesterday I received an answer in which she expresses hopes of the same sort. I write, therefore, Sir, to say that, if any assurance on this point—short of an absolute promise—can have weight with you, I am ready to give it. I object to an absolute promise, not out of any desire to secure a decent method of evading my engagement, but because there appears something more than rashness in binding ourselves, by a solemn obligation, to perform what the uncertainty of human events hourly tells us we may never have the power of performing ; and assuredly, under whatever circumstances it could be required of me, I shall consider an assurance as binding as a promise.

“But, while I thus state the purport of my letter, I am conscious that I do not hold that place in your regard which can ensure it a very favourable reception. Among other circumstances which have contributed to alienate from me that small share of your esteem which I used to think I possessed, I have heard (from more quarters than one) that some or all of my letters to you, Sir, were con-

sidered as breathing a spirit of contemptuous insolence. Whether any single expressions of that tendency escaped me or no I cannot positively say;—the *only* one particularly mentioned to me was certainly pointed, not at any of my guardians, but at the boys of the school which I had left. This, however, I can most safely assert—that, whatever acrimony I might indulge in, I never felt my respect for Mr. Hall in any degree lessened; and therefore, if either the whole tenor or any single phrases of my letters warrant such a conclusion as that I meant to show the shadow of contempt for you, Sir, I can only say that they must have been assumed to serve the purposes of anger, and as such I here, solemnly, fully, and without reserve, retract and annul them.

“Sorry as I am, however, to lie under the imputation of having expressed sentiments towards Mr. Hall so contrary to those which I really feel, I should be still more sorry if I thought it possible that, in thus disavowing such sentiments, I could be suspected of acting a part for the purpose of compassing a favourite point. I may therefore observe that, with me, going to college is *not* a favourite point;—at least, I mean, it is not an object which I have looked to with any ardour of desire. In whatever I feel of inclination for academic pursuits, I am influenced entirely by my mother’s wish that I should quit a mode of life which she considers useless and inactive; and in thus attempting to obtain your approbation and

furtherance of such a plan, I am actuated by the joint wishes of my mother and myself—that, on entering into a new scene of life (at the best, perilous and expensive), I should do it not with a mere negative forbearance of opposition on the part of my guardians, but with that positive consent and union of all parties which gives stability to any scheme—spirit and animation to any hopes.—I am, Sir, with high respect, your humble servant,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

“*P.S.*—Have the goodness, Sir, to direct your answer—*To the care of Mr. Cragg, Liverpool.*”

“Rev. SAMUEL HALL,

“Near St. Peter’s Church, Oxford Street, Manchester.”

IV.

“PRIORY, *July* 1803.

“DEAR THOMAS,—It is a most extraordinary thing, yet true, that I sent you £6, but have no acct. of it in my book, or method of tracing where it has been lost; therefore, to make no useless stir at the office or of a boy whom I have discharged, I send you £8 enclosed, paying up to last Wednesday. You may as well get the dates of the letters you have had from me, and see whether I do not mention an enclosure, which I must have done if any you received contained one. I hope you will soon hear from Mr. Hall. We are indifferent, all except Mary. For her I have determined to get such advice as her

case seems to require.—I am, dear Thomas, your affectionate mother,

E. DE QUINCEY.

“I wrote to Mr. Hall since your last, and urged him to answer you.

“Mr. T. DE QUINCEY,

“Care of Mr. Cragg’s, Mercht., Liverpool.”

Mr. Hall’s answer did not reach him for some weeks ; and then the way was opened for a return to The Priory and the society of his family.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRIORY, CHESTER.

OF his life at The Priory during those weeks when efforts were being made to effect definite arrangements with his guardians for a satisfactory entrance at Oxford, he has given a very faithful and humorous account in the chapter headed "The Priory" in the "Autobiographic Sketches" and in the "Confessions." It was evidently anything but a pleasant condition of affairs for him. His mother was inclined to show too much that the memory of his revolt and rebellion was present to her mind—though she abstained from speaking of them; his uncle was too inclined to be autocratic and self-opinionated, as indeed it fits an old Indian to be, in any conversations they had. He thus speaks in a fragment found among his papers of topics of conversation at The Priory, which differs in some important respects from what he published; it is evidently a first draught, which was rejected in favour of a later version :—

"Two topics I remember as more than all others recurrent at The Priory breakfast-table—viz., *India* in the first place, as a thorny, a most thorny problem, or rather a very jungle of such problems; and

secondly, *Government* in relation to the duties (but also, which females are far too apt to overlook, in relation to the rights) of us outside barbarians, the governed. I will take this second topic first. My mother, who on all questions of moral obligation was a rigorist, listening to no cases of exception or modification, had the most awful ideas of the King's rights as regarded taxes. To cheat *him*, or to attempt it, was by no shadow of a difference to be distinguished from a fraud upon one's poorest neighbour. She was the only person I ever knew that in making her returns of assessed taxes, income-tax, &c., upon any doubts arising such as constantly *did* arise, immediately solved the case by surcharging herself. Now, *my* view of such cases ran in the very opposite direction. I held that if I detected Government (through their agent the Postmaster-General) in cheating me upon the postage of a letter,—a crime towards which they had a sad propensity,—there accrued to me in such a case a regular compensatory right of what I called 'drawback.' I acquired instantly a retaliatory right of extorting indemnification in any way left open to me by the vigilance of my antagonist. No need to stand upon niceties there: any channel through which the overcharge could be recovered was a legitimate channel. And in the account between us the arrear posted up against Government was frightful, and far beyond any man's power to overtake it within one generation. For the case between us assumed a rule-of-three aspect. As is forty

millions to my private income as one of six children, viz., £150, so is thirteenpence (the ordinary fraud practised) to that equitable penalty which I am entitled to recover from the goods, wherever found, of the inequitable British Government."

With respect to The Priory itself, the quaintness of the whole, and its literary and antiquarian interests, seem to have laid hold of him, and caused him to be much attracted by the miniature mansion. He has noticed its characteristics and beauties in a sketch—the original sketch, we have no doubt, from which the description was drawn—which appeared in the "Autobiographic Sketches;" and as it may afford to some the interest of comparison in points of style and in some other points, we shall append it:—

"It was a little gem in the field of the picturesque,—or at least what might be rated as a gem when taken with its advantages of low price, of convenience of neighbourhood, &c.,—which extinguished in one moment all previous valuations and estimates. This miniature Priory was attached to the walls of the very ancient Anglo-Saxon church dedicated to St. John. Besides the interest derived from its beauty, it had a separate interest derived from its later history. In the last twenty years of Elizabeth, and the first twenty of James, The Priory had belonged to Sir Robert Cotton, the antiquary. Sir Robert was connected notoriously with Selden, Ben Jonson, &c., and, like Selden, brought the light of archæology and legal learning to co-operate in rekindling the fire of civil liberty. The little Priory,

which from its picturesqueness in the first place, and its antiquarian interests in the second, I should have deemed cheap at a couple of thousand pounds, was actually offered to my mother, and instantly bought by her, for a sum less than five hundred. The description at that date was this: there were five rooms on the upper storey—viz., two inferior little bedrooms, say eight or ten feet above the other rooms and approached by a tiny staircase, with hall; a short lobby ran from the foot of the lower staircase to an outer door with the tiniest hall of its own, opening upon a little quiet lawn, with a few beds of flowers, abutting against the walls of the venerable church; and from the little garden was a door leading into the public park of the churchyard. This section of The Priory was most obviously for the servants. At the foot of the staircase was a very pretty and quiet hall, solemnised by some beautiful coloured glass in the main door of entrance. From the hall you advanced to the principal room, a dining-room of moderate size. The entrance-hall, the dining-room, and a bedroom, communicating with the dining-room, were all elegant; but by much the most noticeable room in the whole building is a kitchen of noble proportions, having a groined roof of stone. I know not what smaller rooms might be connected with the kitchen: altogether there might be from nine to twelve rooms in the two storeys of the building as it was in the original state purchased by my mother. She immediately threw out a drawing-room, in suitable proportion to the dining-

room, and about six little bedrooms, or three bedrooms with dressing-rooms attached. On the lower storey she added a housekeeper's room and other corresponding rooms; so that, on the whole, there must be about twenty rooms. The glory of this miniature Priory rested in the ancient hall, dining-room, but above all in the kitchen."

CHAPTER IX.

AT WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

DE QUINCEY'S mother, having once yielded to her son's desire to enter at Oxford, was careful to lose no chance of forwarding his views when once he had gone into residence there. Her letters to him at this period are marked by great anxiety for his welfare; she dwells upon the minutest points, and is eager to keep up his interest in all home and family matters. The correspondence at this time is valuable and interesting as tending to show that, in spite of formality of manner, there was really in her much more tenderness than lay on the surface, that she was prepared for any form of self-denial likely to secure her children's happiness and success in life, and that she was more fitted to deal with and influence adults than to attract and gain the homage and profound love of childhood. Indeed, we see here how, when her children had reached the point of reflection on their own account, she could, with consummate address, appeal to their sense of duty and higher self-interest; with such tact, indeed, that, had the proper foundation of mutual affectionate confidence been but laid in infancy, it is hardly possible that

she should not have succeeded in her aims with regard to them. But it must be confessed she had to deal with natures that originally were somewhat impatient of discipline; and this had only been confirmed by the lack of that spontaneous affection which, missed in childhood, can hardly ever be regained, at all events in any effective measure.

Mr. Saintsbury, in the article to which we have already referred, says: "His mother and guardians left him entirely to his own resources at Oxford;—seem to have put fifty guineas in his pocket and sent him up to Oxford, without even recommending him a college (they could at least have made sure that he would not have gone to that particular one if they had), and with an income that made it practically certain that he would once more seek the Jews."

Whatever fault may lie at the door of De Quincey's most active guardian, the Rev. Samuel Hall, on that score, it is clear from the letters which were given in last chapter and those which follow, that De Quincey's mother was not at all blamable in the degree that Mr. Saintsbury (speaking from the information then before him) would have the public to believe. Whatever she may have failed in, she did not fail here; but, of course, it would be too much to expect that she should be familiar with the outs and ins of Oxford life, or know the points in which one college was superior to another.

On Colonel Penson returning to India, it would appear that she tired of Chester, and let and then

sold The Priory, betaking herself to Bath, and then rejoining her daughter Mary at Hinckley.

We select from her letters of this period what is most interesting and characteristic :—

I.

“BATH, Dec. 27, 1803.

“MY DEAREST THOMAS,—I received your letter in the very act of leaving Chester last Wednesday morning; being rather before the usual hour of delivery at the office, Mrs. Burgess obtained my letters as a favour and gave them in at the chaise window as I passed. What you have done with the best intent, though I know only one of the motives which determined your choice of Worcester College, I can here only wish experimentally prosperous. If you have not sacrificed too much to a single motive, I trust it will be prosperous as heart can wish.

“You must write to me when you want money, and stay where you are, as I am sure nothing would be saved by coming hither for so short a time as from now to the 20th Jan. I find all things dearer here than when I left Bath, though I am told lower than the last and preceding year. I hope you have received your book-trunk and a large box of other things; and I am sure it is not amiss to hope your things have not, like mine, been sent round to London at double the proper cost,—one of the grossest tricks I ever had played upon me.

“I have taken a small house for a month, No. 13 Vineyards; it is Mr. Bradshaw’s; his son is colonel of the Bolton Volunteers, and the family stay there the winter. I go to the house on Saturday;—at present am at No. 7 Vineyards. Bath is said to be very poorly filled this season, and I believe it is, though it either is, or seems to me, more brilliant than usual:—indeed I should have judged it full of company by the troops of finely dressed men and women who throng Milsom Street in a morning. I am so deeply immersed in arranging my house affairs that I cannot write much. I may say, too, in apprehension, that I shall have my packages upon me before Mr. Kelsall’s remittance arrives, which I expected yesterday; and then, at the rate I have paid for my first trunk, I shall not have money to redeem them from the hands of the carrier without borrowing. With these things pressing on my mind, you see how impossible it is, at least for me, to write on better subjects.

“Direct to Mary, at Mrs. Crabb’s, Hinckley, Leicestershire. Tell her I will send her her allowance as soon as I get money. I had a dreary journey hither. How the coach gets over the road between Wem and Shrewsbury I cannot guess; the water was so out between these places, approaching the latter, for a quarter of a mile, that no traces of road or way-marks were to be seen: a man in a boat told us how to steer. Direct to the Post-Office.

“I left your uncle well, preparing for the inspection of the six troops by Colonel Cuyler last Friday.

He did not know whether Colonel Dod¹ would take the command or Major Wild, or whether the whole command would fall upon him.

“My dear, very dear Thomas, believe me most truly in every sense, as well as most tenderly, your affectionate mother,
E. QUINCEY.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq., Post-Office, Oxford.”

II.

“BATH, *Jan.* 27, 1804.

“MY DEAREST THOMAS,—Fearing that you would feel uncomfortable at not receiving the necessary means of removing to your new rooms, I write to tell you I am myself waiting for money from Manchester, and cannot communicate till my own pocket is replenished ; so if you cannot enter till you pay, you must wait a little. I hope to get bills in a week from this, but as Mr. Kelsall is a slow man, I do not look for them sooner. I have boldly written to Mr. Hall asking help, not in a tone of supplication, but as a matter of right, and what he will say to it I know not ; but, having experienced very little of his favour or justice of late, I expect only to have help from Mr. K., and again to labour to pay off the score, as I have done before, by a rigorous system of self-denial. In such a prospect I have nothing

¹ See opening of chapter “The Priory, Chester,” in “Autobiographic Sketches,” for De Quincey’s account of the impulse under which his uncle and Colonel Dod engaged themselves in active service, and Colonel Penson’s devotion and responsibility.

to urge upon you, my dearest son, but to choose as moderate rooms as you can, consistently with comfort, or even a little below that, as you may change them hereafter. I believe by next Michaelmas I shall, at the worst, have got through my difficulties. The cloud I speak of which has darkened my horizon so long must, humanly speaking, disperse before a year passes, at least as far as pecuniary hardships have helped to collect it. As soon as your uncle leaves me I reduce my present reduced establishment one-half, and surely such a plan of finance must operate.

“You have not written to Mary; she is doing well, I hope, and is really advancing to recovery. Your uncle sends his love to you. Mr. Pratt is here on a visit to his mother, and has made many kind inquiries after you. Maria is here also. Joseph is at college in Cambridge, and has of his own proper election determined for the Church, and is very studious.

“From the accounts I have read of the miserable Mrs. Lee, joined to the remembrance of her morals four years ago, I cannot see her case as you do. I think she is no more mad than any person may be said to be who outrages conscience. She always panted for celebrity, and was, when I knew her, full of rage at the world that it had taken no notice of her talents, which she thought of a high order; and she told me she should take the first opportunity of uniting herself to a man who had wisdom to be above vulgar prejudices; and, seeing there are, in

her sense, plenty of such men—that is, people who despise both the laws of God and man—I suppose she has been so united long before this; but still, finding the place too common to bestow distinction, she has tried to gain it by ringing a few changes on the manner of displaying her contempt of established things. What this will do for her she perhaps knows by this time. The dream does not surprise me; she was ever, like many other infidels, uncommonly superstitious.¹

“Direct your next to No. 37 St. James’s Parade. We have found as good accommodation on cheaper terms. God bless you for ever, my dear.—Yours ever,

E. QUINCEY.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq., Post-Office, Oxford.”

III.

“HINCKLEY, Oct. 10, 1804.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—Mary’s letter yesterday to Miss Austin has put me into an alarm to think of your distress upon not finding me at Clifton, as I suppose you could have no more money than would just bring you thither. It is amazing, though very useless to puzzle myself with conjectures, by what means you could suppose I had left Hinckley, when every letter did or ought to have assured you of my inability to stir. My fever has very little abated,

¹ Mrs. Lee is written of by De Quincey under the title of “The Female Infidel.” It is curious and interesting to read letters recording the impressions made by her upon De Quincey’s mother.

and is likely, I fear, to be very obstinate. I trust it has pleased God to spare me from any greater ill consequence from the accident, though time alone can finally ascertain this point; unfortunately my fear of an operation (not of death itself), and the knowledge of what belongs to my unfortunate accident, acquired during my attendance upon you in yours, combine to disturb my pulse and my nerves.

“To remedy as much and all I can your distress, is to despatch this letter to meet you at Oxford.

“Enclosed I send you two half £5 notes; the other two I will send the day I have your receipt for these.

“I mortally transgress Mr. Chepher’s rules by writing, and thinking of embarrassing affairs, and I really have done nothing but think how you would manage to get to college.—I am, my dear son, your affectionate mother,

E. QUINCEY.

“Half a £5 note, No. 5247.—date Aug. 20, 1804.

Do. No. 3468.—date July 31, 1804.

“Mind to join the right halves together when you get them. You were to have sent me your acct., for which I waited, supposing you would send it in time for me to remit your money to Minehead.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq., Worcester College, Oxford.”

The accident referred to was the upsetting of a coach, of which we shall hear more immediately, as in the accident a trunk was lost, and it became needful to claim compensation for it—a trying piece of work in those days, it would appear.

IV.

“ CLIFTON, Dec. 29, 1806.

“ MY DEAREST THOMAS,—I send you all the newspapers forthcoming ; some, I know, are lost. We are very well, but I have been and am amazingly harassed by my negotiator, Mr. Kempe, who spreads so many difficulties in the way of either getting money or clothes from the proprietors of the mail-coach, that I feel on the point of giving up the whole as lost, although my right to both has been recognised in this office, and I have heard a letter from Lad Lane of the same import. You will be called upon to prove the delivery of the trunk. I hear you have not called at the coffee-house in Piccadilly for the books ; pray do not lose them. The parcel contains eleven *Christian Observers*, and you are to buy the twelfth, which will be out on Wednesday, and will make up the year’s set for your uncle. Direct to Captain Penson, Military Establishment, Bengal,—To the care of Messrs. Downie & Maitland, Calcutta. Deliver the parcel, when you have made it up with your pamphlets, to Mr. Bohner, 86 Fleet Street ; and the letter addressed to him, with the parcel of *Observers*.¹ I have desired Mr. Kempe, when he is paid at Lad Lane, to take four pounds, and to give you the rest ; but if at last he gets nothing, which I expect may be the case, and that

¹ *Christian Observer*, edited by Zachary Macaulay, father of Lord Macaulay.

only from his extraordinary disposition to cavil, which never leaves him on any occasion, insomuch that I can believe he will not receive the money without argument. I must pay you, then, in another manner. I find from Mrs. Tudor at Reading that you took care of my cloak, which I carelessly left behind me, a trick neither very becoming to my years nor very happily timed, just as I was lecturing you not to lose the umbrella. I have given Mr. Kempe your address. He now comes forth with the alarming remark that you did not book the trunk, and I have retorted upon him that you would have booked it, as I desired you, but for his assurance that it was needless, and never done when the thing was to accompany a passenger. I would not endure so much occupation of thought, or call others to share it, if this odious business was of less serious amount. At a round guess, my claim upon the trunk is not less than £25—in addition to about eighteen guineas for the journey. The loss of all this will make a sad deficiency in my ways and means this quarter.

“I have nothing more to say but that we expect you as soon as you are at liberty to come. Jane says you mentioned after the 29th June. I think you said the 2nd. Pray write directly and let me know if you are detained for want of the money, and I will at all events get it immediately, if I borrow. I shall be very glad to see you, my very dear Thomas. —Yours, with the greatest and truest affection,

“E. QUINCEY.

“Mr. Kemp is at 23 Bryanston Street, Portman Square, and has taken lodgings No. 11 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square.

“Upon reckoning up the value of our trunk and its contents, it amounts to something more than £40, making all conscientious allowance for the wear of things not absolutely new. I have nothing left but a few old rags.

“T. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“5 Northumberland Street, Marybone.”

V.

“CLIFTON, Jan. 10, 1807.

“MY DEAREST THOMAS,—I am very sorry that I am not to see you as I expected. I hope we shall meet again!

“I should have sent the money to town but for the expectation of your coming, and your assurance that you did not want it. Indeed, though I now enclose the half of a £10 note, I am not sure that you will be in Oxford to receive it; and as you have not told me how you have settled the affair with your old college, I feel that it is but a random thing to direct thither, and nothing less than the possibility of being drained for money, which I think is implied in your letter, would make me run any hazard of losing this half note. Pray let me know as soon as you get it, and I will send the remainder. Tell me how to direct if you change your college. I must have my cloak, if you please; put it in a

brown paper and send it by coach, having paid twopence for booking.

“I am uncertain all this time whether I shall get any redress for the loss of my clothes and all the outrage I have met with. I am about £60 out of pocket, against which I have only my journey to set. Mr. Cowper has kindly undertaken to fight my battle with the zeal of a friend who may be trusted to lead me into no scrapes worse than the first.

“Jane is both sorry and vexed at not seeing you, but she sends her love with Henry’s.—Believe me, my dear son, your very tenderly affectionate mother,

E. QUINCEY.

“I have sent you the half of £10, for I am sure I owe you too nearly that sum to make any deduction. You paid for the coach to Lad Lane, and, for aught I know, for the carriage of my trunk.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“No. 5 Northumberland Street, Marybone, London.

(Had been redirected from Oxford.)

VI.

From his sister Jane, at Miss Montier’s School, Clapham :—

“Sept. 13, 1806.

“I am going to make an *attempt*, my dear brother, to persuade you to write to me ; but as I understand the difficulty of the undertaking, I must prepare

myself for disappointment. Remember, in the first place, that you have promised, and a gentleman should never break his word; in the second place, that you have a great deal more time for writing than I have, so that all depends upon inclination; thirdly and lastly, you must know how much pleasure it would give me to hear from you. If you still remain immovable, if you are yet unconvinced by all these arguments, then, alas! have my time and eloquence been employed in vain. Whether you are walking on the borders of Lake Windermere or on the shores of the Mersey, reading Milton under some old oak or sitting in your rooms at college, I am ignorant; but I shall trust this letter, with all it contains, to the mercy of the winds, and let it fly about the world in search of you.

“I am reading Robertson’s ‘Charles the Fifth,’ Hume, and Milhot’s ‘History of France.’ I am learning music, drawing, dancing, French, Italian, geometry, and the use of the globes. We have about a page and a half of Blair’s ‘Lectures,’ on precision of style, &c., read three times over to us every other day, which we write down each time from memory, and have it corrected as an exercise, and in the same way with a book entitled ‘Synonimes François.’ We are going to have a box fixed up in the room which I call ‘The Lion’s Mouth,’ in which every one is to throw something of their own composition, and at the end of the week these exercises are to be read aloud for the benefit

of the whole community. I should not much like to have you behind the scenes. We have also a book which is read aloud once a week, and in which the good and bad actions of every one are recorded. Miss Montier's number is fifteen, and there is not at present any vacancy. The greater part of the children are about fifteen years of age.

"I am quite provoked that every letter which I have written, and in which I have inquired after you, has only produced some unsatisfactory reply.

"Direct to me at Miss Montier's, Balham Cottage, near Clapham, Surrey; and if you have the slightest sense of shame, or the slightest desire to retrieve your character, write immediately a very long letter to your ever-affectionate sister,

"JEANNETTE DE QUINCEY.

"I have not forgotten something like a promise, which you once made to me, of giving me some poetry which you were to compose on purpose. It would be very acceptable; if you have seen the Lakes, pray give me some account of them.

"THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

"At Mrs. BEST's, Everton, nr. Liverpool."

VII.

"BROCKLEY, 8th July.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I send this by Mr. Harden, and should have come myself if it had not rained so. I folded it well in paper, that he might not

see the redness of the cover through it, and thereby judge what it was.—Your truly affectionate brother,

H. DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq., Westhay, near Wrington.”

Added by T. de Quincey :—

“*Mem.*—The book was ‘The Simpliciad,’ by Mr. Mant, a poor Oxford fool.”

VIII.

“DEAR THOMAS,—I have written a few lines to inform you that I acquainted Mr. Keith with my intention of coming on Monday next (for that was the day agreed upon between Mrs. B. and myself, as I should be sure that my mother was come home by that time) to see you all for a few days, and he gave me permission. I shall therefore come to breakfast with you on that morning.

“I got home very well the evening I left you, for, instead of raining (as Mr. Borrowoughs thought it would), it became a very pleasant evening.

“When I come I hope to find you better than when I saw you last.

“I hear that the Prince came in a dirty travelling chaise and four, accompanied by a few other hack chaises and a curricule in which was a lady (supposed to be Lady Berkeley), and an officer who drove it: a very poor equipage indeed for a Prince! However, be his equipage what it will, his dinner was

wretched indeed, for he had scarcely a single person to dine with him. The Mayor, who, I fancy, was a vulgar Cit, did not ask anybody but the Bishop, the Dean, and a few other gentlemen, quite forgetting the General and all the principal officers, who certainly ought to have been asked before the avaricious merchants. But it was well for the Prince that he had not to stay long, for he went away before night. The treatment of the son will not, I should think, induce the father to come here again in a hurry; for as he was entering the merchant's hall one of the rabble snatched a musket from a soldier, with the intention, as was thought, of killing the Prince, but it was quickly taken from him. A very absurd notion indeed; for it is natural to suppose that, if he wanted to kill the Prince, he would have procured arms unknown to the world. A like event happened which must not be forgot in the annals of yesterday. A man who appeared to be an old sailor attempted to break through the lines because he could not pass, but was repulsed by one of the colonels. Upon this, the man (who, I dare say, had been in many a naval battle) took it in dudgeon, and gave him a hearty blow, which almost knocked all his teeth down his throat.—I remain your ever-affectionate brother,

“H. DE Q.

“Oct. 7th.

“T. DE QUINCEY, Esq., Dowry Parade, Clifton.”

CHAPTER X.

EARLY INTERCOURSE OF DE QUINCEY AND WORDSWORTH.

DE QUINCEY has himself told, in his own characteristic way, of the profound impression made on him by the "Lyrical Ballads," and with what eagerness he looked for every new product from the same hands. His devotion led him frequently to think of writing to Wordsworth; and when he ran away from school, his first thought was to move in the direction of the Lakes, mainly with the thought of seeing Wordsworth, if he could not muster up courage to introduce himself to the poet. But he was restrained by the idea that the character of a runaway schoolboy was not the best in which he might first make himself known; and he accordingly sought a retreat in Wales, instead of in the Westmoreland valleys. But the profound admiration continued and grew, and no sooner was he set free from the doubtful position in which he had been placed by his flight from Manchester than he devoted himself to writing a letter to the poet, making him acquainted with the fact that he had one admirer more than he knew of. That letter of De Quincey is lost, and he does not seem to have pre-

served a copy of it, or, at all events, no copy is found among his papers. In his reply to that letter, Wordsworth wrote with an unconscious expression of some of his most characteristic traits, seen in the cautious way in which he warns the young man from a too one-sided devotion to any poet, even himself, to the exclusion of others, and in many other little touches. Here are some excerpts from the letter, which bears date, "Grasmere, near Kendal, July 29, 1803 :"—

I.

"It is impossible not to be pleased when one is told that one has given too much pleasure ; and it is to me a still higher gratification to find that my poems have impressed a stranger with such favourable ideas of my character as a man. Having said this, which is easily said, I find some difficulty in replying more particularly to your letter.

"It is needful to say that it would be out of nature were I not to have kind feelings towards one who expresses sentiments of such profound esteem and admiration of my writings as you have done. You can have no doubt but that these sentiments, however conveyed to me, must have been acceptable ; and I assure you that they are still more welcome coming from yourself. You will thus perceive that the main end which you proposed to yourself in writing to me is answered, viz., that I am already kindly disposed towards you. My friend-

ship it is not in my power to give ; this is a gift which no man can make ; it is not in our own power. A sound and healthy friendship is the growth of time and circumstance ; it will spring up and thrive like a wild-flower when these favour, and when they do not it is in vain to look for it.

“I do not suppose that I am saying anything that you do not know as well as myself. I am simply reminding you of a commonplace truth which your high admiration of me may have robbed, perhaps, of that weight which it ought to have with you. . . .

“The very unreasonable value which you set upon my writings, compared with those of others, gave me great concern. You are young and ingenuous, and I wrote with a hope of pleasing the young, the ingenuous, the unworldly, above all others, but sorry indeed should I be to stand in the way of the proper influence of other writers. You will know that I allude to the great names of past times, and above all to those of our own country.

“I have taken the liberty of saying this much to hasten on the time when you will value my poems not less, but those of others more. That time, I know, would come of itself, and may come sooner for what I have said, which, at all events, I am sure you cannot take ill. . . .

“I am going with my friend Coleridge and my sister upon a tour into Scotland for six weeks or two months. This will prevent me hearing from you as soon as I could wish, as most likely we shall

set off in a few days. If, however, you write immediately, I may have the pleasure of receiving your letter before our departure; if we are gone, I shall order it to be sent after me. I need not add that it will give me great pleasure to see you at Grasmere, if you should ever come this way.

.

“I have just looked over what I have written, and find that towards the conclusion I have been in a most unwarrantable hurry, especially in what I have said on seeing you here. I seem to have expressed myself absolutely with coldness. This is not in my feelings, I assure you. I shall indeed be very happy to see you at Grasmere, if you ever find it convenient to visit this delightful country. You speak of yourself as being very young, and therefore may have many engagements of great importance with respect to your worldly concerns and future happiness in life. Do not neglect these on my account; but if, consistent with these and your other duties, you could find time to visit this country, which is no great distance from your present residence, I should, I repeat, be very happy to see you.”

II.

The next letter is dated “Grasmere, March 6, 1804,” and had been addressed to St. John’s Priory, Chester, forwarded from thence to Bath, and from there to Worcester College, Oxford. After some

explanations of the cause of his long silence, Wordsworth goes on to say :—

“Your last letter gave me great pleasure ; it was indeed a very amiable one, and I was highly gratified in the thought of being so endeared to you by the moral effect of my writings. I am afraid you may have been hurt at not hearing from me, and may have construed my silence into neglect or inattention—I mean in the ordinary sense of the word. I assure you this has by no means been the case ; I have thought of you very often and with great interest, and wished to hear from you again, which I hope I should have done, had you not perhaps been apprehensive that your letter might be an intrusion. I should have been very glad to hear from you, and another letter might have roused me to discharge sooner the duty which I had shoved aside. . . .

“We had a most delightful tour of six weeks in Scotland ; our pleasure, however, was not a little dashed by the necessity under which Mr. Coleridge found himself of leaving us, at the end of something more than a fortnight, from ill health and a dread of the rains (his complaint being rheumatic), which then, after a long drought, appeared to be setting in. The weather, however, on the whole was excellent, and we were amply repaid for our pains.

“As, most likely, you will make the tour of the Highlands some time or other, do not fail to let

me know beforehand, and I will tell you what we thought most worth seeing, as far as we went. Our tour, though most delightful, was very imperfect, being nothing more than what is commonly called the short tour, with considerable deviations. We left Loch Ness, the Fall of Foyers, &c. &c., unvisited.

“By this time I conclude you have taken up your abode at Oxford. I hope this letter, though sent at random partly, will be forwarded, and that it will find you. I am anxious to hear how far you are satisfied with yourself at Oxford, and, above all, that you have not been seduced into unworthy pleasures and pursuits. The state of both the Universities is, I believe, much better than formerly in respect to the morals and manners of the students. I know that Cambridge is greatly improved since when I was there, which is about thirteen years ago. The manners of the young men were very frantic and dissolute at that time, and Oxford was no better, or worse. I need not say to you that there is no true dignity but in virtue and temperance, and, let me add, chastity; and that the best safeguard of all these is the cultivation of pure pleasures, namely, those of the intellect and affections. I have much anxiety on this head, from a sincere concern for your welfare and the melancholy retrospect which forces itself upon one, of the number of men of genius who have fallen beneath the evils that lurk there. I do not mean to preach; I speak in simplicity and tender apprehension, as one lover of

nature and virtue speaking to another. Do not on any account fail to tell me whether you are satisfied with yourself since your migration to Oxford; if not, do your duty to yourself immediately. Love nature and books; seek these, and you will be happy; for virtuous friendship and love and knowledge of mankind must inevitably accompany these, all things ripening in their due season. I am now writing a poem on my own earlier life; I have just finished that part in which I speak of my residence at the University; it would give me great pleasure to send this work to you at this time, as I am sure, from the interest you have taken in the *L. B.*, that it would please you, and might also be of service to you. This poem will not be published these many years, and never during my lifetime, till I have finished a larger and more important work to which it is tributary. Of this larger work I have written one book and several scattered fragments: it is a moral and philosophical poem; the subject whatever I find most interesting, in nature, man, and society, and most adapted to poetic illustration. To this work I mean to devote the prime of my life and the chief force of my mind. I have also arranged the plan of a narrative poem; and if I live to finish these three principal works I shall be content. That on my life, the least important of the three, is better than half complete, viz., four books, amounting to about 2500 lines. They are all to be in blank verse. I have taken the liberty of saying this much of my concerns to you, not doubting that

it would interest you. You have as yet had little knowledge of me but as a poet ; but I hope, if we live, we shall be still more nearly united."

Enclosing a lengthened letter dated "Grasmere, Monday, March 19, 1804," Wordsworth says:—

"I cannot express to you how much pleasure it gave me to learn that my poems had been of such eminent service to you as you describe. May God grant that you may persevere in all good habits, desires, and resolutions.

"Such facts as you have communicated to me are an abundant recompense for all the labour and pains which the profession of poetry requires, and without which nothing permanent or good can be produced. I am at present much engaged, and therefore I know you will excuse my adding more ; I will only request that you will be so good as write to me soon after you receive the letter above spoken of, if you find a disposition so to do."

[Most readers will, we think, admit that, alike for their expression of Wordsworth's character, their wise reserve, their lofty moral tone, as of a true mentor, and their fine insight, even as seen from these few extracts, it would be an unspeakable loss were these letters to be entirely and for ever lost to the world.]

CHAPTER XI.

THE GIFT TO COLERIDGE—COTTLE'S LETTERS, ETC.

THE facts respecting De Quincey's gift to Coleridge are well known, but the letters connected with the matter have not been hitherto published at length. As the affair now belongs to literary history, the public may be pleased to peruse the correspondence respecting it, as far as it exists. It has the additional merit of showing that some misunderstanding or difference had arisen between Coleridge and Cottle, and that De Quincey's generous offer furnished an occasion for Cottle to remove it. The first letter is from Cottle to Coleridge :—

I.

“DEAR COLERIDGE,—You have often been the subject of conversation between myself and an oppulent (*sic*) friend, a gentleman of the city, a man of great worth, and who has discernment enough rightly to estimate your genius. I was much affected with the letter which I received from you a few days ago, and which I read to the gentleman before referred to. He inquired whether

I thought any of your unpleasant feelings arose from pecuniary considerations. I told him I could not absolutely say, but that I apprehended in some measure it might. He immediately proposed to make you a present, observing that if your circumstances were not embarrassed, they might be made more comfortable, and was about to speak to me more particularly on the subject. I checked him in this intention, and told him not to obey the momentary impulse of generosity, but to consider the subject maturely, and when he had come to a calm decision to communicate with me again on the subject. He said he would, and that he would call on me again in the beginning of next week. This day I have seen him, and he has desired me expressly to make you an offer of three hundred pounds. He is a man of so much delicacy, that (from an apprehension that you would be more likely to accept this sum from me rather than from a stranger) he wished this sum to come directly from *me*. To this, however, I decidedly objected; he then stipulated with me that his name should be concealed. Much additional conversation passed between us, which I shall communicate when we meet; but the result of the whole is, that this gentleman only waits your assent to present you with this sum.

“I must tell you that there is not a man in the kingdom of whom you would rather accept a favour, and I can assure you he is a character too respectable and too decided to express what he does not mean.

I shall await your answer with much anxiety, and remain, in the meantime, yours, with much affection,
J. C."

II.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The morning before last I saw Mr. Coleridge, and our meeting was with the cordiality of old friends. Every atom of resentment vanished in a moment. As I was the aggrieved person, I feel much pleasure in having conquered my spirit and written to him the first conciliatory letter. I never had the shadow of a misunderstanding with any human being before, and I hope the effect of Christian principles will defend me, whatever the provocation, from any such in future.

"The more particular object of this letter is the following: I took an opportunity of mentioning to Coleridge the substance of the letter, a copy of which I gave you. When I mentioned the offer which I was authorised to make him, for a few moments he was silent; he seemed oppressed. The tears came in his eyes. 'Cottle,' said he, 'I cannot return an answer now, but I will write to you. I cannot speak further to you now.' After a little pause he said: 'Tell me; can the Gentleman afford it?' I told him that I was satisfied he could; 'Then,' said he, 'I will think in what way, as an honest man, I can accept it, but I will write to you on the subject.' Then the conversation on that subject wholly ended. He did not make any further inquiry concerning the Gentleman, nor has he the

slightest idea who he is. He was to have called on me at eleven o'clock this morning, but I have just received a Note from him to say that he is unwell, but will endeavour to call on me in the evening.

"As I thus expect to see him this evening and conjecture that he will not refuse your offer, I write to you for further instructions in this embassy, and hope, in your own way, to establish a definitive treaty, between the High Contracting Parties.—
From yours, with great sincerity,

"JOSEPH COTTLE.

"*P.S.*—I have no doubt but that Coleridge has suffered exceedingly from straits. I am sure he is the greatest genius breathing, and that such a mind should be perplexed about mutton and pudding and waistcoats and hose for himself and children is piteous and afflicting. These things paralyse his efforts. Under favourable auspices, what gigantic effort would be too mighty for him?

"BRUNSWICK SQUARE, Oct. 7, 1807."

[Coleridge's letter to Cottle—the letter here referred to as promised—will be found at pp. 97-8 of "*Memoir of De Quincey*," cheap edition.]

III.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I beg your acceptance of a Copy of the "*Fall of Cambria*,"¹ and accompany it with

¹ "*The Fall of Cambria*" was one of Cottle's own poems; for he was a voluminous author. A second edition of "*The Fall of Cambria*" was

one line to inquire after your health, and to say that your Agent at Manchester remitted me a surplus of Eighteen Pounds, which I should be glad immediately to pay you in any way which you will be so good as to point out.—Believe me to be, yours, with great sincerity,

JOSEPH COTTLE.

“*P.S.*—I saw very little of Coleridge after you left Bristol. I presume that you attend his lectures and that you have often met him. I am happy to think that, independently of any idea of Gratitude, he is disposed to think so favourably of you.

“BRISTOL, *Jan.* 31, 1808.”

[The above letter was enclosed, as the next letter will show, in the parcel with the volume to Messrs. Longmans, London; and that parcel De Quincey did not receive till after receipt of the letter which follows :—]

IV.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I was happy in receiving a letter from you yesterday dated Oxford. When I last saw you, you informed me that it was your intention to visit Bristol again at Christmas, so that, till the receipt of your letter, I had been in the constant expectation of seeing you.

“It is now my wish to inform you respecting the money which I received from you and Mr. Kelsall.

published in 1811. His chief works were: “The Malvern Hills” (1798), “John the Baptist” (1802), “Alfred” (1804).

By referring to the memorandum which I gave you at the time, you at first

Paid me	£166	17	2
In November I received from Mr. Kelsall	25	0	0
And in 4 Notes on London	126	7	0
	<hr/>		
	£318	4	2
I paid for discounting 4 bills on London	14	6	
	<hr/>		
	£317	9	8
Agreeable to your request I paid			
Mr. Coleridge	£300	0	0
And I now send you enclosed			
Banker's draft on London for	17	9	8
	<hr/>		
	£317	9	8

“When I paid Mr. Coleridge your Three Hundred Pounds, he gave me the following receipt:—

“‘*November the 12th, 1807.*

“‘Received from Mr. Joseph Cottle, the sum of Three Hundred Pounds presented to me through him by an unknown Friend.
S. T. COLERIDGE.’

I had previously paid him £166, 17s. 2d., for which he gave me an acknowledgment, but, on receiving the remainder, he gave me one receipt for the whole. When I paid Mr. C. the money, he made no inquiry concerning the Donor, but he was much agitated in reckoning the Bills, and was evidently silent from the excess of feeling. He shed tears, and holding out his hand, with his head on one side, he said, falteringly, ‘Cottle, I will write to you. God bless you.’ He has not written to me expressly on the

subject. I suspect there were some peculiar circumstances which rendered the money acceptable.

“Altho’ you restricted me (except under certain circumstances which did not occur) from mentioning your name, and in which I think you did right, yet I am satisfied that Coleridge entertains *no doubt* of the source whence the money was derived. The tenor of my conversation with him respecting you must have been conclusive to a mind much less penetrating than Coleridge’s, and in a letter which I afterwards addressed to him, I observed the pleasure it w^d give me to learn that he had an opportunity of introducing Mr. de Quincey into one of his select literary Societies. I also further remarked that I also knew you to be ‘a noble-minded young man.’ It w^d not have satisfied my mind to have said less than this, and perhaps it w^d not have been well to have said more. I have taken care that a transaction so honourable to yourself, in all its circumstances, shall not be forgotten, and by thus judiciously concealing your name you avoid all feeling of direct obligation, and in your future intercourse with Coleridge will preserve more of independence, which, to some minds, is essential to friendship.

“I should have been glad if your time could have allowed you to say something more concerning him, and also something concerning yourself. Your pulmonary complaint, I hope, has troubled you less this winter than has been usual. Take care of yourself, and I pray that One may take care of you and bless

you, whose favour is better than life.—I am, yours
ever, with great sincerity,

JOSEPH COTTLE.

“*P.S.*—I sent you a copy of the ‘Fall of Cambria,’ which was left at Messrs. Longmans’, Paternoster Row, and in which I enclosed a letter. When you have an opportunity I suppose you will send for it.”

[For further details respecting the gift to Coleridge, with Coleridge’s letters, &c., see *Memoir*, new edition, pp. 96–100, and *Appendix*, pp. 502–4.]

CHAPTER XII.

S. T. COLERIDGE AND DE QUINCEY.

DURING De Quincey's stay in London in 1808 he saw a good deal of Coleridge, who was then lodged at the *Courier* Office in the Strand, where his friend, Mr. Stuart, the proprietor of that paper, was careful to see that he was faithfully ministered to in all possible ways. He was then in indifferent health, and laboured under much depression. De Quincey, who was then staying in Marylebone, was a favoured visitor; delighted to be of service in any way to one whom he regarded alike as a teacher and a benefactor. De Quincey indeed bore a roving commission to buy for Coleridge rare and valuable books of many kinds; and we find in Coleridge's letters such passages as this:—

“If you should meet with the edition of the *De Emendatione* we spoke of, in the course of a month or two (for I shall certainly not want it for two or three months even if my life be continued to me), and it be procurable at a decent price, be so good as to secure it for me, as likewise Longus, Heliodorus, and D’Orville. But here I must be distinctly understood. I asked the New Testament from a sincere desire to have the best good book as a

lasting memorial: you must consent to be my commissioner, which, when I have better health, I will gladly be for you."

That De Quincey had impressed Coleridge with his power of thought and critical judgment is amply borne out in his letters. The first letter is a long one. Coleridge, after having commissioned De Quincey to look out for certain books for him, and asked his opinion on various points, thus proceeds to assure him that he need feel no fear or have any diffidence in expressing himself with perfect frankness:—

I.

"And now permit me, my dear young friend, to do justice to myself as to one part of a character which has not many *positive* bad points in it, though in a moral *marasmus* from negatives, from misdemeanours of omission, and from weakness and moral cowardice of moral pain. But I can affirm with a *sense* of *certainty*, intuitively distinguished from a mere delusive feeling of *positiveness*, that no man I have ever known is less affected by partiality to his own productions or thoughts. It w^d have been indeed far, far better for me—in some little degree perhaps for society—if I could have attached more importance, greater warmth of feeling, to my own writings. But I have not been happy enough for that.—So, however it is that, the pleasure of receiving that proof of friendship—'I cannot say that this or that satisfied me—I did not like this for

such and such reasons—it appeared to be slight, not the genuine stuff, &c.’—has often blinded me so far as to believe at once and for a long season more meanly of what I had done than after experience justified. I do therefore earnestly ask of you as a proof of Friendship that you will so far get over your natural modesty and timidity as without reserve or withholding to tell me exactly what you think and feel on the perusal of anything I may submit to you—for even if it be only your feelings, they will be valuable to me: far more indeed than those criticisms in which the feeling is not stated and mere objections made which, being weak, have in one or two instances prevented my perception of real defects, which I should soon have discovered if it had been said, ‘There is something amiss in this; I feel it—perhaps it may be so-and-so—perhaps not, but something I feel amiss.’ God bless you! Be assured of my unfeigned esteem.

“S. T. COLERIDGE.

“When I am tolerably recovered, in case of no relapse, I will, on the first opportunity, make the party we spoke of.

“T. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“No. 5 Northumberland Street, Marybone.”

II.

The next letter is full of anxiety because De Quincey had not called for some days, during which Coleridge has been prostrated:—

“*Tuesday Night*, 348 STRAND
[postmark 3rd Feb. 1808].

“DEAR DE QUINCEY,—I have suffered considerable alarm at not having seen you for so many days: lest you should be ill, or malaccident have befallen you. I myself have had a relapse of a very fearful menace. Having walked to and from Lambe’s to procure his MS. selections from the Dramatists of the age of Shakespeare, I stopped in our office below, to look over the *Courier*: and although I could not have stayed above five minutes, yet (in some small part perhaps the wetness of the newspaper might have been the Κακοδαιμων Κακοδαιμωνιζων as actual or predisposing cause or both) the street damp struck up from my Shoes to my Bowels, and passed, like a poison-flash, thro’ my nervous system.”

And then follows a lengthy description of symptoms, and of the specific action of medicines taken; and he proceeds:—

“Would to Heaven! (depressing as the suspense has been to me,) yet would to Heaven! that I had to utter no less tolerable groans! There is a passage of Jeremy Taylor’s Holy Dying, at the conclusion of one of the earlier Chapters, of transcendent pathos and eloquence, which my last sentence recalled to my recollection.

“I write, however, not to trouble your feelings with useless concern,—indeed I had not the most distant intention of doing so, or even Thought, till

I had already written it, from blind Instinct of the Heart's Weakness,—but first and chiefly to ascertain whether any worse cause has prevented my seeing you than the distance, the weather, and preoccupation; and, secondly, to say that, no Relapse happening to make it absolutely impracticable, or other cause equivalent, I shall give my lecture on Friday afternoon, two o'clock, and that an admission Ticket will be left for you with the Doorkeeper, unless I hear from you that you cannot come. Should this be the case (*quod Di avertant*—relatively of course to the occasion, not the effect) be so good as to let me have a line from you immediately. This indeed I request at all events, for I do not know why—probably from my own low spirits and general languor of heart—I have had Bodings utterly out of all Proportion to the exact number of days that you have been absent.

“I have neither written to nor heard from Grasmere for a long time. Should you have occasion to write, you will remember me to them, and say that I hope to write soon. I have had to begin such a volume of letters to them dolefully, that I myself feel an insupportable Disgust by anticipative sympathy. But I shrink away like a cowed dog from the Task of adding to the number: and having nothing of joy to communicate to them, I would rather they should hear of the contrary from others than from myself. That there is such a man in the World as Wordsworth, and that such a man enjoys such a family, makes both Death and my

inefficient life, a less grievous Thought to me.—
Believe me ever yours, with affectionate esteem,

“S. T. COLERIDGE.”

On September 12, 1809, we find Professor Wilson (Memoir, i. p. 163) proposing to De Quincey to accompany him on a six-months' tour in Spain: “I intend going to Spain in a few weeks, to traverse as great a part of it as circumstances may allow; and knowing the deep interest you take in the destiny of the Spaniards, I have thought of communicating to you my design. Mr. Wordsworth, who, with his wife, is now staying at Elleray, has strongly recommended me to write to you on this subject. My plan is to go by packet to Lisbon in October.” De Quincey was prudent enough to write and consult Coleridge, as having had experience of travel; and he received from him early in October the following letter, attesting that Coleridge could be practical for others, if not for himself—his letter, no doubt, being influential in dissuading De Quincey from the enterprise:—

III.

“MY DEAR MR. DE QUINCEY,—If I felt myself competent to offer a decisive opinion on your present plan, even the hazard of offending you would not make me withhold it: for advice from one better qualified to give it you may easily receive, but

hardly from one who esteems you more or who has reflected on the subject with a more affectionate anxiety. But I am too little acquainted with your views, inclinations, and motives, and not sufficiently master of other important circumstances, to offer you *advice*. Yet a few general remarks, I am sure, you will take kindly from me, tho' all on one side of the question: not, my dear Sir, that I see no arguments in favour of your expedition, but because I presume with good reason, that all those have already occurred to you; besides that these being more *subjective* than *objective*, and grounded on facts which you know better than any other person can, you must be far more competent to count, weigh, and measure them than I. Therefore I will write wholly on the selfish side of the question, tho', Heaven knows, without selfishness, much as this prospect of your passing the winter here had delighted me.

"It has always been my opinion that you w^d do wisely in travelling on the Continent some time or other. The question at present is: whether you should do it at this time, and under the present circumstances. Independent of the temporary amusement (which I take for granted will not weigh much with you, its balance over that which you w^d have at Grasmere being an uncertain thing, subject to the deduction of the sea-voyages, if, after all, only postponed, not abandoned), all the reasons *pro* and *con* may be reduced to your Instruction, in which I include all your remembrances, whether

of eye, heart, or understanding, and to your Health. I am to plead *in contra*; and, instead of pleading, I will merely put down Hints as in a Memorandum-Book.

“ 1. Instruction.

“ A most interesting period, I grant; but are you likely to be able to stay long enough to become master of the Spanish Language, without which you can learn little more than the outside of Things, here bustle, there quiescence? With two English companions, and two English servants, are you likely to acquire it conversationally? But a far more important objection, which I scarcely know how, with perfect comfort to my own feelings, to press upon you with all the force in which my own experience represents it to me. It is, that three of you together are far far too many, and *must*—I speak with confidence, for I tried it both in Sicily and in Germany—exclude you from all particular conversations and the best means of acquiring knowledge. The natives cannot act towards such a party as the best of them would towards you alone or with one companion only. The number of your suite will even tend to produce an alienating influence. I travelled for a month in Germany with a German: for five weeks with three Englishmen: in the latter Tour I had a hundred more advantages, letters of introduction, &c., and the objects were far more interesting, both the places we visited, and the literary characters to whom we were introduced. And yet the remembrances and valuable knowledge which I bore away

from the former outweighed the latter a hundred-fold. Depend upon it, two persons a man can talk to; but three make a visiting party. And will not the number of English officers and officials in Cadiz and other chief towns be an additional obstacle?—One other remark, and I finish this head. Is not Spain at present too much unsettled, and the Government too close as well as too suspicious to permit you to see, hear, and acquire as much as you would do should you go at the close of next summer? if the Spaniards hold out—then the Cortes will have assembled, then Debates will be discussed in every company, and furnish you with a hundred heads of Inquiry, and the means of making them without hazard; then, too, the Country will have been organized, and the character of the nation drawn forth out of all its hiding Holes; and then, too, the Press will doubtless be unfettered, and you will have the opportunity of bringing away with you the best productions of Spanish wisdom.

2. “And now a few words respecting y^r health. It gave me great pleasure to see how much stronger you seem. Your constitution is evidently strengthening, and with care and regular Exercise, I have little doubt that in another year you will have eft all your complaints behind you, and have muscularized into as much steady good health and strength as a man, who thinks and feels as much as you, can expect. The rapid motions of the French—the roads cleared of mules—a mountainous Country—the chance, almost my fears dictate the probability of

your being obliged to travel night and day, perhaps on foot—the known fact that the least intemperance of Exercise in the mountainous parts of Spain, will lay the seeds of a Fever: For all these reasons I cannot but wish that when you travel you sh^d do it with a better prospect of its most essential aids and conveniences than can be hoped for at present, especially for so large a party.

“These are the heads of what my reason suggests to me, kept as much aloof from my fears and wishes as I can. You will doubtless talk on the subject with our dear and honoured Friend, W. W.—I have never discussed the subject with him; but as I shall have more confidence in my arguments if they strike him too with the same force, so, if the contrary should prove to be the case, I shall be inclined to think that my own bad health and increasing low spirits have been playing the Meddlers with my understanding.

“Go you or stay you,
may God bless you; and if you go
speedily and safely restore you
to your Friends, among which
think with kindness of

S. T. COLERIDGE.

“GRASMERE, Oct. 1809.”

De Quincey never did, however, carry out Coleridge's recommendation at some time or other to travel on the Continent: he never saw Germany, with whose philosophers he was so familiar; he never trod the soil of France, with whose history he

was so well acquainted, and portions of which, as witness the passages on Joan of Arc, he has glorified with the gleam of his eloquence. His furthest effort in the way of travel was a visit paid his daughter Margaret, at Lisheen, in Ireland, in the company of his son, Paul Frederick, when an old man, which led him to quite a different point than that which he had seen in the outset of life when he visited Westport.

We find De Quincey thus writing in his "Recollections of Charles Lamb :"—

"In [the winter of 1809 and] 1810 *The Friend* was in a course of publication by single sheets of sixteen pages. These, by the terms of the prospectus, should have appeared weekly. But if at any time it happened that Wordsworth or anybody else interested in the theme came into Coleridge's study whilst he was commencing his periodical lucubrations, and, naturally enough, led him into an oral disquisition upon it, then perished all chance for that week's fulfilment of the contract. Miss Hutchinson, who was aware of this, did her best to throw hindrances in the way of this catastrophe, but too often ineffectually; and, accordingly, to this cause, as a principal one amongst others, may be ascribed the very irregular intervals between the several numbers of *The Friend* in its first edition; and to this also, perhaps, the abrupt termination of the whole at the twenty-ninth number."

During this time Coleridge was domiciled with Wordsworth; and we have many indications of the

lively interest he as well as De Quincey took in the Wordsworth children, more especially in little Kate.

During that residence of Coleridge at the *Courier* Office he incurred money obligations to De Quincey, the latter having advanced at various times small sums to meet pressing debts, and for the purchase of books, as we have seen him commissioned to do. De Quincey, years later, when in the toils with the "Confessions," and with yet more uncongenial hack-work for Messrs. Taylor & Hessey, and pressed on all sides, as we know, with difficulties as to money, and miserable in his exile from Westmoreland and his family, struggling at once with the hard task of seeking remunerative openings for the product of his pen, and with the affection of the liver induced by his efforts to subdue his opium-cravings, ventured to remind Coleridge of these little matters. Coleridge's reply was at once characteristic and touching: he was then resident with the Gillmans at Highgate, but was unable to aid De Quincey in his turn, as he would have desired to do :—

IV.

"HIGHGATE, *Wednesday, Noon.*

[*Postmark, Aug. 9, 1821.*]

"Believe me, I entreat you, my dear De Quincey, there was no need to remind me of generous acts, which during the long interval I have never ceased to think of,—of late more especially with an unquiet and *aching* gratitude which has often checked my inquiries after you from a pang of fear,

a foreboding that I should hear of something that w^d make me feel my poverty as a *humiliation*—would turn an ever-recurring Wish of the Heart into an absolute *Want* which not now for the first time I have anxiously looked about for some means of gratifying, and still baffled, sink under a Regret that almost seems to border on Remorse. Few and transient have been the spots of sunshine on my ‘way of Life,’ and these almost always on the distant landscape, but whenever a brighter prospect has dawned on me, the recollections connected with your name took a foremost part in every scheme that I proposed to myself.

“I feel that I am lingering on the brink; and what to say, my dear Sir, I know not! Distressing, and in relation to you and the circumstances under which you have written to me—doubly distressing as the disclosure will be, nothing else is left me but to lay before you the naked truth—that I am unable to do what I would.” . . .

[And then follows a pitiful tale of his losses with *The Friend*, disappointments with lectures, and comparative failure of “Christabel,” &c. &c. &c.]

“Dear De Quincey, I conjure you to feel convinced that, were it in my power—let what w^d come the next week—to raise the money, you sh^d not have received this melancholy history as an answer. Were you to see me at this moment, you w^d know with what anguish and sickness of soul I subscribe myself, your *obliged* and grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.”

CHAPTER XIII.

WORDSWORTH'S LETTERS ABOUT CONVENTION OF CINTRA PAMPHLET.

FROM amidst a mass of letters we content ourselves with selecting some for extract bearing, with one exception, on the famous pamphlet which the Rev. Dr. Grosart has reprinted in the first volume of Wordsworth's Prose Works. De Quincey's devotion to Wordsworth in these years could not have had a more signal proof than the labour he spent on seeing this pamphlet through the press, and on writing the appendix for it. In no case are the letters given completely, but only such passages as bear on this work. The first is dated "Grasmere, Wed., 29th March 1809," to De Quincey at 82 Great Titchfield Street, London, where, as we know from the Memoir, he then lodged:—

I.

"Mr. Crump, my Landlord, called here this morning; he did not stay much above two hours, and as soon as he had heard the dismal tale of the chimneys and cellars, he began to crow—and over what, think you? The inert, the lazy, the helpless, the worthless

Spaniards—clapping his wings at the same time in honour of Bonaparte. This was the truth, though he perhaps was not aware how his wings were employed. Mr. Crump introduced the subject, and his words were, ‘Well, Mr. W., is there no good to come of this? What do you say to rooting out the Friars, abolishing the Inquisition, sweeping away the feudal tenures?’—in short, though he did not mean to defend Bonaparte. ‘Oh no, on no account; yet certainly he would be a great Benefactor to the Spaniards: they were such vile slaves.’ In short, I found this good and excellent man (I do believe as kind a hearted attorney as breathes) completely saturated with Roscoism. I squeezed a little of it out of him, as much as the time would allow, but the sponge will be filled again the next dining party he is present at upon his return. In Mrs. Clarke’s phrase, there are black sheep at Liverpool—this I had first heard from you; and it was confirmed by Mr. Wilson—and you may be sure I was not a little pleased with the remembrance of what I had added to the Pamphlet upon this subject and upon that of national independence in general. But to come to the point. He quoted, as proofs of the miserable state of public spirit upon the Peninsula, the Letters of Sir J. Moore recently published by Government; and I found that these had made a great impression, to the prejudice of the Spaniards, upon his mind and upon the minds of those with whom he associates. Now, what I wish is, that you would give a review of these Letters, not speaking with any

asperity of Sir J. M., though the Letters would thoroughly justify it; but this the People of England would not bear, he being a Commander-in-Chief shot and, of course, in their tender estimations, *cannonized*. I have only seen such of those Letters as appeared in the *Courier* of Friday (March 24), they are in number four—and at the end it is said they are to be continued. From these my opinion of Sir J. M. is completely made up, that he was a sober, steady-minded man, but without any comprehensiveness or originality of mind, and totally unfit for so arduous a situation. I know that you have accurately in memory all the events of the campaign, and would find no difficulty in making such comments upon these Letters as would tend very much to obviate the unfavourable impression which, if left to themselves, I am sure they will make. I will just set down at random two or three thoughts such as struck me as a skeleton for the material of such a note.

“First to remind the Reader of the situation in which Sir J. Moore stood, and of the purpose for which these Letters were written—namely, under a conviction that his army could accomplish nothing; and to save himself from reproach in that quarter by which he had been sent—the Ministry. Now it was clear that the best way to succeed in this, was not to charge those who had sent him with blame, but to fling the whole upon the Spaniards. Accordingly he enters into a dolorous account of the dispersion and defeat of Blake’s army, flying in every direc-

tion, the Estremadura Army routed, and Castanos totally defeated. But nowhere do we hear a word of the gallant and desperate resistance which Blake made for so many days,—of the courage and even temerity of the Estremadurans; and the fate of Castanos is totally misrepresented, inasmuch as his centre only was defeated, his two wings being untouched, part of which retired south and part threw themselves into Saragossa, where they made, as we know, a most valiant resistance. In fact, Sir J. Moore nowhere speaks like a soldier, for he seems to be surprised that these raw Levies could not stand their ground, upon all occasions, against the practised troops of Bonaparte, and seems surprised at the composition of the Spanish armies. The regular Troops of Spain had, for the most part, been kidnapped by Bonaparte, and he ought to have known beforehand that the armies could be no other than what he found them, except as to numbers. But we are interested in the question, not as a military one, but as the facts affect the dispositions of the Spanish People. Now, there can be no doubt, from the condition in which Sir J. M. found the armies and the spirit of the people in many parts of Spain, that the Supreme Junta had strangely neglected their duty. And it scarcely seems possible that any number of them can be men of talents; but this subject—I mean of their talents—must in the Note be touched gently. Sir J. M. seems to have thought literally with the Lawyers, ‘*De non apparentibus et non existentibus essilem est ratio* ;’ that is,

because the people were not huzzaing and shouting like a mob at an election or a rout of drunkards reeling from a fair, that therefore they had no sense of their injuries. I know not that such was his sentiment, but assuredly many people in England will draw conclusions to the same purpose from his statement. All this apparent listlessness and laziness is to be attributed solely to the Government not having taken proper means to circulate instructions and animating writings among the people; and to organise them in such a manner that an electric shock might pass from mind to mind, and from one town to another,—from one village to another, through all the Land. He states that small parties of the French scoured the country of Leon without meeting any resistance from the inhabitants. This fact I cannot believe upon the evidence of any General, because my knowledge of human nature teaches me beforehand that it is impossible. That the resistance might fall far below what a superficial thinker would expect, I can easily believe; things of this sort, where regular arrangements have not been made to preclude such inactivities, and to give men a hope of embodying their passions in action by furnishing them with the means of so doing, depend upon accident. A single enterprising man, of a character like one of the old Buccaneers, would have drawn after him hundreds of the peasants of Leon for any Service, however desperate. But to keep to my text—I mean the unfairness of any conclusions drawn from Sir J. M.'s account to the

prejudice of the elements and materials out of which Spanish regeneration was to arise. Take one instance, namely, that of Salamanca. It certainly was not his business, writing with such views as he had, when he represents the indifference and tranquillity which were then prevalent, to state to the Ministry that the flower of the Students of Salamanca had formed themselves into a Battalion, which had fought as volunteers in Blake's army, and with such conduct and valour, that their General had held them up to the especial admiration and gratitude of their countrymen. And who knows how many of the most active spirits among the Townsmen of the same place had perished in that Army? It was not his business to state this—but it becomes those who are in such a hurry to entertain unfavourable opinions of the Spanish nation to recollect it. In fact, with respect to the Spaniards, two conclusions may be fairly drawn from Moore's Letters, neither of which any sensible man ever doubted of before—first, that the Supreme Junta has been miserably remiss; and secondly, that the Spanish levies—*armies*, as they were foolishly called—could not stand against the French, except where situation greatly favoured them. A third conclusion may be drawn from the charge which, though he has pushed so hard upon the Spaniard, Sir J. M. makes, in his own despite, upon the Ministry—that he was sent with a pitiful force, and that force was never an efficient army. My wish, then, is twofold,—that you should clearly state what there is in these Letters

that fairly tells against the Spanish people ; what fairly against the armies, as made up of the People ; and what against the Spanish Government ; and finally should accumulate upon that the achievements of the south and south-east of Spain. As to the Note, let it be candid and quite respectful to Sir J. M.—I mean candid even to *tenderness*. The British People are wretchedly cowardly in these feelings, and upon some future occasion it may be proper to tell them so. I do think, however, that, in justice to the subject, some surprise at Sir J. M.'s apparent disappointment at the defeat of the Spanish armies should be expressed. The concluding Paragraph need not be altered on account of Palafox's reported Death. In the Page which you will have been obliged to cancel with the footnote, you may, if you think proper, add a footnote of two words to 'Saragossa,' namely, 'written in January.'

"*P.S.*—If you shrink from the responsibility of any of the opinions which you might like to express in this note, say that it is written by a Friend of the Author upon his suggestion, after having seen four of these Letters, he himself having not been able to complete the Note owing to his distance from the Press, without great delay, if he had waited till the whole of the Letters had reached him."

II.

The next letter bears date March 30, 1809:—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—All your alterations are amendments—the hiatus about knowledge you supplied as I wrote it; and how *refined* slipped into the manuscript for *defined*, I cannot conceive. The footnote about Saragossa I am sorry you had the trouble of writing, as all the evil (if any) may be obviated by a word or two in the advertisement, begging the Reader to bear in mind that the work was begun in November or December and carried on since that period, the publication having been delayed partly by accidents, and still more from a wish to wait for further evidence of facts; and that it seemed better to leave passages of this kind as they were written than to alter them. Besides, you will see by what is now sent, that, so far from thinking that Saragossa has broken her bond, in my estimation she has discharged it to the Letter. The last siege seems to have been even more glorious than the former.—It will therefore be necessary to *cancel* the page with the footnote, on account of what you will find I have said in the text. If you deem it advisable to add any remarks in the Appendix upon the iniquitous, the infernal Bulletin of the French, pray take the trouble of doing so. For my part, their own account proves incontestably that the Spaniards have done as much as ever was performed by human

beings in like circumstance. Curse on our Ministers for not having raised that siege, which would have been so easy!

“I am afraid you will have had endless trouble about the alterations, small and great. You do not say what you did about the petition part and Charles the Second as talked about at Ambleside. ‘Arm of the Almighty,’ I wished rather to stand, ‘and gave to them the deep faith which they have expressed that their power was favoured and assisted by the Almighty;’ perhaps you have substituted something better. The great body of additions sent, since the conclusion was sent, will begin in this manner, after some expression like this which I cannot recollect, ‘administered as the old Monarchy of Spain.’

“But I began with hope, and hope goes along with me. ‘In Madrid, in Ferrol,’ &c.,—I cannot find the passage in my MS. Therefore if anything be wanting to smooth the junction, you will be so kind as to add it. I mean to say that the heart of the people is sound; the first direction given for the insertions is therefore set aside; it would indeed there have been quite out of its place, so near the conclusion. Any expressions which lead the reader to expect the conclusion too soon, such as ‘parting look,’ &c. &c., you will of course omit. As to concluding with a quotation, I don’t know how to get over that; it could not conclude with the Paragraph before, the simile not being sufficiently upon a level with ordinary imaginations. Does what you will now find added require an alteration in the first

words of the last Paragraph? I ask this question because I cannot find the MS. If it does, be so good as make it. I have alluded to the blasphemous address to Bonaparte made by some Italian deputies, which you remember we read at Grasmere some time ago, and his answer. I should like to have referred to the very words in the Appendix, but it is in vain to seek for the Paper. If, without much trouble, you could find it in the file of *Couriers* at the office, I should exceedingly like such parts as you might approve of, both of address and answer, to be inserted in the Appendix. It is of considerable consequence; for, if I am not mistaken, there was also the avowal which he has so repeatedly made to the Spaniards, that power is, in his estimation, the measure of right; in other words, that he will rule over them, whether they will or no. Many thanks for your trouble about the Note on the Board of Inquiry. If any quotations which I have made from the proceedings of that Board should be grossly inaccurate, I don't mean as to words but in spirit, pray correct that by a note in the Appendix, as far as possible.

"I am obliged to put things down just as they come into my memory; but, as I know your habits of order, I can trust to you for correcting this. There is one passage which would stand better thus (the sentence would be clearer, and its connection with the preceding clearer), 'The tendency of such education to warp, and therefore weaken the intellect,' omitting what is said about 'shutting

out from common sympathies and genuine knowledge.' I have said 'desposited in the Escorial;' was that the place?

"I have said 'Swede or Norwegian,' thinking that Norway has not forfeited its national independence, having, as I believe (and I have *Hartley's* authority to corroborate my opinion), fallen to the Crown of Denmark by marriage. But strange! we have here no book of Geography or History to give us information. If I should prove mistaken, let the word 'Norwegian' be omitted.

"I return to your proposed Note upon the French Bulletin upon Saragossa. It would certainly be rendering good service if you could concisely expose the contradictions of this heinous document, and point the Indignation of the Public against its cowardly and execrable calumnies. I have a further reason for this, because I have done injustice to Gen. Ferguson, by not mentioning in the body of the work his marked disapprobation of the Convention of Cintra, and therefore a note must be added upon this subject. A fair occasion was given, a while ago, by a passage in the *Moniteur*, and the note, after you had exposed the wickedness of the French Bulletin, might conclude in a manner like this (I have stopped the pen and hunted in vain all over the house for the *Courier* that contains the passage I wish to advert to. It may be easily found by consulting the file at the office. It is some observation in the *Moniteur*, which appeared within the course of a month past, upon the votes of thanks

in the H. of Commons concerning the campaign in Portugal. I wished to extract some six or seven lines, where the paper says, among other well-founded insults, ‘You were unable to drive the French out of Portugal’): ‘Official Papers of Governments containing such assertions in the face of such facts can only be injurious to their authors; but it is lamentably different when in an official journal of the French Government we meet with the following passage, supported by the documents of the Armistice and Convention of Cintra. In such combination there is sterling truth enough to give currency to a thousand lies;’ then quote the passage from the *Moniteur*, interposing any other words which you may think proper, such as I cannot accommodate to the passage, not having it before me, and perhaps no words may be necessary.

‘——pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dicii potuisse, et non portuisse refelli.’

‘And what avail our victories?
How can they be refuted with such evidence against us?

——And all the while he read he did extend
His sword high over him, if aught he did offend.’

“The Title-Page need not state ‘first part.’ I do not wish to engage myself so far, having now said so much. For the Distribution of the Work, I much approve of your sending it with a Latin Note to the Spanish and Portuguese Ambassadors, but I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of your sending it with your own name or initials,—let it not be done on any account. He may learn that you are an inti-

mate friend of mine, and may suspect it to be an act of personal malice on my part. Consult with Mr. Stuart about sending any number to such public characters as you and he may think proper. Send one in my name to Gen. Ferguson, one to Mr. Curwen, and one to R^d Sharpe, Esq., M.P., Mark Lane."

III.

Miss Wordsworth added to this letter the following lines:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Hartley and Derwent wait, therefore I have only a moment. Thomas has had the measles, and is quite recovered,—happier, lovelier, and handsomer than he has been for many weeks before; but poor Catherine is grievously reduced. She has had every symptom of the measles *except* the eruption, and Mr. Kemble, for want of that symptom, pronounces it not to be the measles in her, yet she had a few spots. *We* are doubtful about it. In the small-pox, you know, there is often no eruption. God bless you, my dear Friend. —Your ever-affectionate

"DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

"Coleridge is not returned. We have heard nothing of him or *The Friend*, except that it is not to appear till the 14th April. He is at Keswick. Miss H. is pretty well.

"THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

"Great Titchfield Street, Cavendish Square, London."

IV.

The next letter bears date May 8, 1809 :—

“The other day I wrote to Mr. Stuart requesting him to look over the Pamphlet, previous to publication, for the express purpose of ascertaining whether it contained matter which would expose me to a prosecution in any of the courts of law ; and I pointed out to him a passage which I deemed the most objectionable of any that occurred to me, recommending, if he agreed with me, that the leaf should be cancelled. The passage is the one where I say, ‘What greater punishment could there be than to have brought upon themselves the *unremovable contempt and hatred* of their countrymen?’ As Wellesley is now at the head of the army, it will be pleaded that it is very dangerous to circulate such opinions concerning men in such high stations. The blame, morally considered, belongs not to me for speaking thus of such a man, but to those who placed him in such high authority after his having given such flagrant proofs of unworthiness. But this I should derive no benefit from, if prosecuted. Therefore, though I left it to the discretion of Mr. Stuart to soften this passage or not, I am now decidedly of opinion that it is much safer and more prudent to cancel the leaf, if the work be not already published. Let it stand something like this, just as it happens to suit : ‘What punishment could be greater than the unalterable sentence

already passed on them by the voice of their countrymen?’ or any words to that effect to fill up the space. Pray do also, previous to the publication, confer with Mr. Stuart upon this question in general, and beg him to exercise his most deliberate judgment upon it.”

V.

To this letter Miss Hutchinson added the following :—

“MY DEAR SIR,—We Females shall be very sorry to find that the Pamphlet is not published, for we have not the least fear of Newgate—if there was but a Garden to walk in, we think we should do very nicely—and a Gaol in the Country would be quite pleasant. But seriously, I hope that the passage may not be deemed objectionable, for another delay will be most provoking, and put Mr. Baldwin out of all patience with you both.

“I am glad to tell you that the workmen have begun to-day in good earnest with your Cottage; we have been down this morning superintending, and we expect that in less than a fortnight it will be ready for the Painters. Ned Wilson is to make the shelves. The Cabinetmaker said that mahogany would be very expensive, and of no use afterwards; for the *shelves* of bookcases were never made of anything but deal or common wood. We are sure that all will be finished long before you arrive—even if William does not call

upon you to attend him into Ireland, of which scheme Miss W. must have told you; namely, that her Brother is to attend me into Wales, and that Mr. Wilson is to follow us, and you join them at our House, and all proceed together.

“Mr. Jameson is to be in London in a few days and Miss Wordsworth will write to you by him. We are all very well. Catherine improves, John grows a better Scholar, and Thomas is quite the beauty, and much improved in his behaviour. One thing I forgot to say about your House, that if you leave it before your term, you must *offer it first to me*, in case I should wish to go into housekeeping, for it is going to be made so neat, that I shall no longer prefer Mr. Gill’s cottage, upon which I had hitherto set my heart. Mr. and Miss W. are just going to set off for Ambleside, where they expect to meet with a Letter from you. God bless you! —Very sincerely yours, S. H.

“Could you bring those books of Mr. Coleridge’s which were detained in London by Mr. Montagu? I ask because I suspect that he may never think about them himself, and I know that he wants Sir T. Browne’s works especially. Mary desires her love to you, and advises you to leave this disagreeable office entirely to Mr. S., as you have had enough of the *unpleasant*.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,
82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

VI.

A few days later Wordsworth writes a letter in which appears this paragraph :—

“I have been much disappointed in not hearing either from you or Mr. Stuart by this night’s Post. I request very much that you would procure an interview with Mr. Stuart immediately, in order that, by your joint efforts, everything may be done which is necessary. As the Pamphlet has been so long delayed, my anxiety to have it out has much abated, and therefore, even on this account, I request that Mr. Stuart would carefully cancel every leaf that contains matter which he thinks, or any person, if he cannot rely upon his own judgment, to whom he may submit the work, thinks would render me liable to a prosecution, either from the Government or the individuals concerned. In fact, as far as relates to this Country, as connected with the cause, my zeal is much abated as are my hopes. How can it be otherwise, when I see Lord Hawkesbury, that was, declare in open Parliament, that the establishment of a military Government in Portugal was justifiable in principle ; and when I see, after such a commander as Moore, a disgraced man like Wellesley (and disgraced too in that manner) placed at the head of the British Army on the Peninsula? I mention this upon the present occasion as a reason for not being willing to incur any risks in directing the indignation of the Public against such

Men; I therefore beg again, if there be any doubt concerning any passage, that it may be inexorably removed. I remember one which I requested some time ago, I believe when I parted from you at Ambleside, might be altered—where, speaking of the King's reproof of the City of London, I said, 'They had been condemned under a sophism, insidiously or ignorantly applied.' Pray was that altered?¹ If not, surely it ought to be—some way in this manner, 'As might be said if the words were not entitled to deference by having been put into his Majesty's mouth insidiously or ignorantly,' &c. Another strong passage which I recollect is, 'In Sir Hew Dalrymple and his Brethren we have generals who have a power of sight only for the strength of their enemies,' &c.² I do not mention this last as particularly insisting upon it; there may be many far worse. But I beg that this Letter may be read to Mr. Stuart, whom I have already requested to exercise his best judgment,—only interfering with it in that one instance about '*hatred* and *contempt*'—and this present of his Majesty's speech, if it is not already altered.

¹ This passage was modified to the following effect: "It was in the character of complainants and denunciators that the petitioners of the City of London appeared before his Majesty's throne; and they have been reproached by his Majesty's Ministers under the cover of a sophism, which, if our anxiety to interpret favourably words sanctioned by the First Magistrate makes us unwilling to think it a deliberate artifice meant for the people, must, however (on the most charitable comment) be pronounced an evidence of no little heedlessness and self-delusion on the part of those who framed it" (Prose Works, vol. i. pp. 109, 110).

² This stands as originally written (Prose Works, vol. i. p. 73, lines 3 to 5 from foot of page).

“My first Letter upon this subject to Mr. Stuart ought to have been received by him last Saturday, on which day he wrote a Letter to me, manifestly not having at that time received mine, on which account I have had considerable anxiety.

“I cannot conclude, my dear Friend, without expressing my sincere and deep regret and sorrow that you should have had so much trouble and mortification in this business. I hope, however, you will soon be at Grasmere, when you may think of it in quiet as a Traveller of a disagreeable journey which he has performed and will not have to repeat.”

[Turning to the *Prose Works of Wordsworth*, vol. i., edited by the Rev. Dr. A. B. Grosart, we find that, though many copies of the pamphlet were circulated with certain corrections made in ink by De Quincey's hand, one of these having been sent to Sir George Beaumont, the editor allowed the pamphlet to reappear without them. Our printing of these errata below, with reference to the pages of the first volume of the *Prose Works*, may therefore be regarded as a slight service to Wordsworth; for some of the corrections he regarded as of the greatest importance, especially three of them, including the error in the motto from Bacon which makes the latter clause of it meaningless, and might easily have been corrected by reference to Bacon's works.]

VII.

"Wednesday, May 24, 1809.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Last night we received the Pamphlet; I have not read the whole, but Miss Hutchinson will transcribe on the opposite leaf the most material errors which I have noticed; three of them are important, and the first, in the motto from Bacon, exceedingly so, 'zeal' for 'hate'—the next 'abuses' of the world for 'abusers,' in the quotation from Sidney; and the next, 'calenture' without the words 'of fancy' following. These are the most important, much: and I dare say the fault has been in the MS., either the words omitted or written illegibly; indeed I am surprised how you have been able to get it done so correctly. I am quite satisfied with your note upon Moore, which is very well done; but had I seen his last letter before I entreated you to be so gentle with him, I should not have been so earnest upon that point. Could anything be more monstrous than his having made that march, as he tells us, to satisfy the people of England of a truth they were not otherwise to be convinced of, viz., that the Spaniards had neither the ability nor the inclination to do anything for themselves?—that is, he exposed his army to great certain loss and to the probability of entire destruction in order to prove thereby a fact to the People of Great Britain which could not be proved in this way at all, could scarcely have by this measure any light thrown upon it; and further, a fact which, if it

were so, would soon show itself. But enough of Sir J. Moore—he was one of the approvers of the Cintra Convention, and I think you have great merit in having treated him with such forbearance. It is now time that I should congratulate you on your escape from so irksome an employment and give you my sincere thanks for all the trouble you have undergone. . . .

“As to the passage about the Army, I hope and believe it is no libel, but certainly Mr. Stuart’s opinion (he having had so long experience) it would have been safe to abide by, because the passage was of no importance; but I hope he is satisfied. I cannot but think myself that there are several passages for which I may be prosecuted if they choose, but in this I have no certain guide to direct my judgment, as these things have nothing to do with morality or good sense, but merely depend upon the temper of the times, or the people in power. I am much pleased with all the passages which you had altered. I am obliged to conclude in a great hurry, but I must beg to hear when you propose to return to Grasmere. Your House is in great forwardness and very neat. We shall all be most happy to see you; but the beauties of this spring you cannot have, as a few days will carry them all away. John is getting by heart the ballad of ‘Chevy Chase,’ and promises himself great pleasure in repeating it to you.—Most affectionately your Friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.”

“*Errata.*”

Motto, *for* ‘zeal or love,’ *read* ‘hate or love.’

Page 96, *for* ‘self-destroying,’ *read* ‘self-destroyed,’ Prose Works, vol. i. p. 104, line 7 from top.

„ 123, *for* ‘injury to itself,’ *read* ‘injury of itself,’ p. 123, line 4 from bottom.

„ 123, *for* ‘obstinacy in them would’ *read*, ‘could,’ p. 124, line 6 from top.

„ 153, *for* ‘intimation, even to this country,’ *read* ‘estimation even, to this country,’ p. 146, line 17 from top.

„ 148, *for* ‘principles,’ *read*, ‘principle,’ p. 142, line 10 from bottom.

„ 169, *for* ‘loves,’ *read* ‘love,’ p. 158, line 4 from top.

„ 178, *for* ‘triumph of human nature. It would,’ &c., *read* ‘triumph of human nature, it would,’ &c., p. 164, line 21 from top.

„ 184, *for* ‘calenture to which,’ *read* ‘calenture of fancy to which,’ p. 169, line 12 from top.

„ 188, *for* ‘act and deed,’ *read* ‘word and act,’ p. 171, line 8 from bottom.

„ 186, *for* ‘abuses,’ *read* ‘abusers,’ p. 170, line 18 from top.

Latin quotation at the end, *for* ‘explete nihil,’ *read* ‘expleti nihil,’ p. 174, line 4 from top.”

VIII.

To this letter Miss Hutchinson adds the following:—

“MY DEAR MR. DE QUINCEY,—I give you free leave to laugh at my *blundering Errata*, but I hope you will be able to make them out, though I do not suppose they will give you any pleasure, or be of much use, except for your own copy, unless a Second Edition should be called for, which is not likely.

William has been in the house all day, so was in hurry to get his walk before it was too late, and left me to this business, which I have not executed to my Satisfaction. You must be so good as send a Pamphlet to Lord Lonsdale, Charles Street, Berkeley Square, from the Author—or rather desire Longman to send it,—but no, William bid me request you to correct, with your pen, the errors of it. I have found out that it is my *pen* that will not write, which makes me in a *muddle*, for the hard labour my fingers are put to is quite enough to occupy my mind also—and I am in too great a hurry to mend my pen. We are all very well, and wish most heartily that you could see your orchard just now, for it is the most beautiful spot upon earth—and a week ago it was still more so, for the blossom of the apple-trees was in all its glory.

“We hear not a word of the *Friend*. Mr. Southey has lost his youngest child but one—a sweet little girl; she died quite unexpectedly, though she had been ill for some time. God bless you!—Yours very sincerely,

S. H.

“You will understand that the second parcel is not arrived, which ought to have been here, according to your Letter, at the time which the first reached us—namely, Tuesday night.”

IX.

“May 30, 1809.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was reading yesterday to Mrs. Wordsworth your note on Moore’s Letters with great pleasure, and expressing at the same time how well it was done: upon which she observed to me, ‘How, then, did not you use stronger language of approbation, when you know to Mr. de Quincey you merely said you were “satisfied with it”?’ I replied that this I considered as including everything; for said I, ‘Mr. de Quincey will do me the justice to believe that, as I knew he was completely master of the subject, my expectation would be high; and if I told him that these were answered, what need I or could I say more?’—I am glad that you treated Moore with so much gentleness and respect—I could not have done so myself; my feelings would not have suffered me, nor could it have accorded with the sentiments I have expressed in the body of the work; for Dalrymple has before the Board of Inquiry taken especial pains to tell us that the Major-Generals approved of the Convention, and that Moore was of the number.—I wish you could have contrived to say something handsome of—(how does he spell his name?)—for he has been infamously traduced, especially by the Opposition. . . . I am sadly grieved about that error in the press in the motto, *zeal* for *hate*, as it utterly destroys the sole reason for presenting the passage so conspicuously to notice. I regret

that I did not request the Pamphlet to be sent down when the Body of it was printed, as I might have reasonably concluded that there must have been blunders in the manuscript which could be known to nobody but myself. In spite of all this it is very correctly printed, and the punctuation pleases me much; though there are here and there trifling errors in it.—I think, indeed, your plan of punctuation admirable.

“Of Coleridge or the *Friend* we hear nothing; he went to Keswick some time ago about it, but what he is doing he does not inform us.—Affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

“The note on the Board of Inquiry is a clencher for that business.”

X.

To the above letter Mrs. Wordsworth added the following :—

“*Friday, May 26.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—I must take the advantage of this blank paper to express to you my congratulations upon your having at last reached the end of your labours, and to repeat at the same time, what William has told you, how much pleasure your part of the Pamphlet has given us. I will not say one word now about the vexations we have had in connection with the thoughts of the trouble that it has caused you—it is all over, and I hate to repeat

grievances. We begin to wish very much that you were amongst us again, but you have no chance of seeing Grasmere in its spring-tide beauty this year. Notwithstanding that most terrible ravages have been made amongst the trees, I never remember to have seen the vale look more lovely than at this moment. Our weather is delightful; we now have gentle rains after a long fit of most glorious dry summer weather. The workmen are very busy about your cottage, so we hope to have all ready for you in a short time. You can well conceive with what interest and pleasure we all (children and all) look forward to and talk of the visits we are to make to you when we have you placed at the Town end. Johnny delights in the thoughts of it; he is learning to repeat ‘Chevy Chase,’ and he tells me with great pride that he thinks he shall be able to ‘say it all when Mr. de Quincey comes home.’ I hope you will find Catherine (your little pupil, as I often tell her) much improved, but she is but a little creature yet. My sister will have told you that she was weaned a few weeks ago, without suffering in the least by the change of food.—Dorothy is still absent. I begin to feel motherly longings to have her at home again. We shall see great changes in her, but I am very doubtful whether for the better or worse. You will smile (and I confess I am half ashamed) at my simplicity for running on in this manner to you. However, the cause rests with yourself, for you have at all times taken so much interest about these children, my thoughts, feeling myself addressing

you, naturally fell into this train, so you must excuse me.

“The latter parcel is not arrived. I fear there is still some further delay, particularly as the Pamphlet is not advertised in the last *Courier* we have seen—namely, Saturday’s. William wishes to see Lord Selkirk’s letter to Major Cartwright—as the parcel *must* be sent off before you receive this, I suppose he means you to bring it with you. My Sister is going to walk to Rydale; perhaps she may meet with the parcel or letter from you. God bless you, my dear Sir! I hope you have gotten rid of the toothache and all your complaints, as your last letters do not speak of yourself.—Believe me to be most affectionately yours,

“W. WORDSWORTH.

“I have written as though I were ambitious to outdo William in blots and bad penmanship.

“May 30, 1809.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY,

“82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

XI.

Under date February 8, 1815, we find Wordsworth writing:—

“MY DEAR SIR,—I have sent to the Printer another stanza to be inserted in ‘Laodamia’ after—

‘While tears were thy best pastime day and night:’ (not a full stop, as before)

‘ And while my youthful peers before my eyes
 (Each hero following his peculiar bent)
 Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
 By martial sports—or, seated in the tent,
 Chieftains and things in council were detained ;
 What time the Fleet at Aulis lay enchained.’

‘ The wish’d-for wind was given : I then resolved our
 future course,’ &c.

So, I fear it must be altered from the Oracle, lest these words should seem to allude to the other answer of the Oracle which commanded the sacrifice of Iphigenia. I wish you had mentioned *why* you desired the *rough* copies of the Preface to be kept, as your request has led me to apprehend that something therein might have appeared to you as better or more clearly expressed than in the after draught ; and I should have been glad to reinstate accordingly. Pray write to us. We are all well.”

CHAPTER XIV.

CORRESPONDENCE OF DOROTHY AND MRS. WORDSWORTH.

THERE is a peculiar interest in the letters addressed to De Quincey by Miss Wordsworth. They had many points of sympathy and thought in common. If Miss Wordsworth could hardly rise to some of his flights of speculation, she could, in some things, lead and aid him as she did her brother. She was keenly susceptible to beauty of form and colour in nature, and to all strains of simple sentiment keenly sympathetic, with a gift of fine expression and interpretation, which William has duly celebrated. De Quincey dwells on one of her special endowments more than once. Here is one of the instances :—

“It is undeniable—and must be familiar to all who have associated upon intimate terms with Wordsworth and his sister—that they both derive a pleasure, originally and organically, more profound than is often witnessed, both from the forms and the colouring of rural nature.”

It was Miss Wordsworth who first communicated to De Quincey the touching story of the Green family, which he retold in his own impressive and

effective way in his “Autobiographic Sketches;” and from this circumstance the following passages from a letter of hers have a special value:—

I.

“George Green and his wife, our Sally’s Father and Mother, went to Langdale on Saturday to a sale; the morning was very cold, and about noon it began to snow, though not heavily, but enough to cover the ground. They left Langdale between five and six o’clock in the evening, and made their way right up the Fells, intending to drop down just above their own cottage in Easedale (Blenkrigg Gill, under Miles Holmes’s Intack). They came to the highest ridge upon the hill, that can be seen from Langdale, in good time, for they were seen there by some people in Langdale; but, alas! they never reached home. They were probably bewildered by a mist before daylight was gone, and may have either fallen down a precipice or perished with cold. Six children had been left in the house, all younger than Sally, and the youngest, an infant at the breast. Poor things! they sat up till eleven o’clock on Saturday night, expecting their parents, and then went to bed, satisfied that they had stopped all night in Langdale on account of the bad weather. The next day they felt no alarm, but stayed in the house quietly, and saw none of the neighbours; therefore it was not known that their Father and

Mother had not come back, till Monday noon, when that pretty little Girl, the eldest of the household (you will remember, having admired the exquisite simplicity and beauty of her figure one day when you were walking with Mary in Easedale). This girl went to George Rowlandson's to borrow a cloak. They asked why, and she told them she was going to seek their folk, who were not come home. George Rowlandson immediately concluded that they were lost, and many then went out to search upon the Fells. Yesterday between fifty and sixty were out, and to-day almost as many, but all in vain. It is very unfortunate that there should be so much snow on the Fells. Mary and I have been up at the house this morning—two of the elder daughters are come home, and all wait with trembling and fear, yet with most earnest wishes, the time when the poor creatures may be brought home and carried to their graves. It is a heart-rending sight, so many little, *little* creatures. The infant was sleeping in the cradle, a delicate creature, the image of Sara Coleridge. Poor Sally is in great distress. We have told her that we will keep her till we can find a nice place for her, and in the meantime instruct her in reading, sewing, &c. We hope she will continue to be a good girl. We do not intend her to have anything to do with the children after our new servant comes. We have hired little Mary, the young woman who lived at Miss Havill's, and who has long been so desirous to come to us. This very moment three, nay four, of

the poor orphans (for Sally was with them) have left the room. The three had been at Mrs. North's who has sent them here with a basket of provisions, and will visit them herself with clothes, all the younger being very ragged. That sweet girl looks so interesting, has such an intelligent, yet so innocent a Countenance, that she would win any heart. She is a far nicer girl than Sally, and one that we could not but have pleasure from; but poor Sally has fallen to us, and we cannot cast her off for her sister; but we hope that Mrs. North will take *her*, or at least send her to school. Old Molly's legs are much swollen, and she grows daily weaker. I hope her sufferings will soon be at an end. She talks with cheerfulness of dying, except when she turns to poor John's desolate condition. I really think I have nothing more to say, for I have not heart to talk of our little concerns, all being well with us. We have been strangely unsettled for these three days. Pray bring Sally a New Testament—you can buy it at Kendal. The children are at school. I hope you will think Thomas looks better than when you went away—he is very healthy. . . . Your affectionate Friend,
DOROTHY WORDSWORTH."

"GRASMERE, *Wednesday, November 23.*

"I open my letter to tell you that we are at ease—the poor lost creatures are found. John Fisher has called at the window to tell us. He says they had rolled a great way, and were found just above

Benson's. Where that is I cannot tell, but it must have been low down. She was near a wall, and he lying a little above her.

"THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,
"Worcester College, Oxford."

The above is, in fact, the story to which De Quincey refers in the opening section of his "Early Recollections of Grasmere" as not having at hand when he wrote that paper: "Miss Wordsworth's simple but fervid memoir not being within my reach at this moment, I must trust to my own recollections and my own impressions to retrace the story."

II.

"*Tuesday, March 10, 1809.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND, — Yesterday morning my Brother and I walked to Rydale, and he, intending to proceed to Brathay, sate upon a stump at the foot of the hill, while I went up to Ann Nicholson's, and there I found your letter. I did not break the seal, for it was already broken (your having sealed it so badly, I suppose); but I opened the letter in Ann's house, just to see if all were well with you, and then I hastened with my prize to William, and sate down beside him to *read* the letter; and truly a feast it was for us. You were very good in being so particular in your account of your journey, and that feeling of your goodness made the entertaining de-

scription of your Fellow-Travellers far more delightful. We rejoiced for the young American that he had met with so knowing an expounder of the state of nations, and agreed that in all England he probably could not have met with one so well qualified to instruct him, certainly not one so kindly willing. Two things we grieved for—your miserable cold ride on the outside of the Coach, and that you should not have felt yourself at liberty to stay at Oxford for rest, and for arranging any business that you might have there. After this it would be very mortifying to you to have to wait day after day for our letters, even a whole week, for our earliest despatches could not reach you till last Saturday. I have explained the cause of this delay. My Brother was indeed very poorly, his head having been continually tormented, and especially upon his pillow at night with those dreadful headaches, which you know he, in his gloomy way, calls apoplectic. He is now very well, and after he once got forward with his work, he went on rapidly with perpetual animation. Do tell us how you like the conclusion? Mary and I thought the whole was written with great dignity; but we, as well as my Brother, could not help regretting that he had not more time to reconsider it. You know he never likes to trust anything away fresh from the Brain. He is now engaged in making an addition to one Paragraph, which is to be transcribed on the other side of this sheet. I hope he will have done in time to save this day's Post (Tuesday); otherwise I fear the types

will be arranged by the Printer, and you and he will have a great deal of trouble.

“It was a week yesterday since Coleridge went to Brathay, and we have not seen him since, for in consequence of a letter from his Printer, and the Regulator of the Stamps at Appleby not being able to settle that business without instructions from the Stamp Office in London, he thought it necessary to go to Penrith and Appleby, and accordingly he had set forward yesterday morning from Lloyd’s about two hours before William’s arrival there, on foot, intending to sleep at Pattendale last night, and go to Penrith to-day. On Saturday I had a note from him, in which he told me that, being deep in the *Tatler*, *Guardian*, *Spectator*, &c., he had stayed day after day at Lloyd’s, and that he had finished his first Essay all but one passage about Dr. Johnson. This was good news; but Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd told my Brother that he had been very poorly during most of the week, and had never risen till near dinner-time. They said, too, that he looked wretchedly yesterday morning. I cannot but fear that the journey and one thing or other (to use one of his own favourite phrases) will knock him up, and that all will at last end in nothing. I wish he had not gone to Penrith, for we think that by letter he could have managed the matter just as well. And at this critical moment it will be for ever to be regretted if any accident of fatigue, bad accommodation, &c. &c., should disarrange his body or mind. If he had been able to stay quietly here,

the trial would have been a fair one, and should he have failed, in future one could never, in case of any other scheme, be vexed with hopes or fears. Observe—he went from Lloyd’s determined that the work should begin on the 1st of April, and that he would stay at Penrith till the first Essay should be printed, and that Essay being so nearly finished, this must be a very easy matter—but then there is the affair of the stamps, and what plague besides I know not, and he is so easily overturned—made ill by the most trifling vexations or fatigue.

“I have just been writing to your Landlord to hasten him with his work at the Cottage. We have taken it for six years, for if you should have no use for it, it would be very easy to let it, being furnished. When your Friend Johnny came from school last night, his Mother said to him, ‘There is a letter from——’ ‘From,’ he replied, ‘Mr. de Quincey?’ And with his own ingenuous blush and smile he came forward to the fireside with a quicker pace, and asked me to read the letter; which I did, with a few omissions and levelling the language to his capacity, and you would have thought yourself well repaid for the trouble of writing it if you could only have seen how feelingly he was interested. When all was over he said, ‘But when will he come? Maybe he’ll tell us in his next letter.’ We hope that before you return he will be much improved in his reading, for he seems now to desire to learn, and takes a

great deal of notice, not only of his own lessons, but of the lessons of the bigger Boys. I cannot say that he seems much to love learning for its own sake. It is the hope of being a printer that moves him, and he knows that he must first be a scholar. I think no event has happened of greater consequence since you left us, than that a little Mouse makes its appearance sometimes under the dining-room grate, and disappears we know not how, for we can find no hole for its escape. This John desired I would communicate to you. *He* thinks it is a Fairy in the shape of a Mouse, ‘For may I tell you what?’ (at this time *I* had not seen the Mouse, and he was relating the story to me); ‘it comes under the grate, and it does not come over the fender, and there is no hole under the grate for it to go through.’ You are therefore called upon to reflect on this prodigy and favour us with your conjectures. This moment Johnny comes from school: ‘So Mr. de Quincey’s letter came, that you said would be here to-day?’ and then, ‘Have you told him about the Mouse?’ and he begged me to read to him what I had said. My Brother tells me I must stop, or I shall not leave room for him.—Believe me, ever your affectionate Friend,

“DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

“My Brother has just come upstairs to tell me that he cannot have transcribed in time for the Keswick post the addition which he has been making; therefore I send this to beg that you will

stop the Press at the words ‘career in the fulness of——.’ The addition will be about a folio sheet. He sent off yesterday a letter with two or three corrections, addressed to you at Marybone. The next letter, which will be by to-morrow’s Post (from Ambleside) we shall direct as this. Adieu. God bless you! I hope your troubles and perplexities in this affair will end with this.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

III.

“*Wednesday, 5th April 1809.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—Since I wrote to you, we have received three letters from you, *i.e.*, one dated 28th March, one enclosed with the pamphlet, and one yesterday dated April 1st. I merely write to set your mind at ease respecting the time when you will receive a full answer from my Brother to your last letter, and to inform you that we received the pamphlets duly on Saturday night, and next morning there was perfect joy in this House over your sweet letter to Johnny. But here I must tell you that in reading the letter to him we omit that part after the description of the carriage where you say you will buy one for him and Sissy. My dear Friend, I believe that you are serious, because you have said so to Johnny; but I earnestly hope that you will be prevailed upon not to buy it. We should grieve most seriously that so much money

should be expended for a carriage for them, when they are completely happy and satisfied with their own, which answers every important purpose of the other. What matter if it is a little 'harder' to pull? (Johnny often says it is very hard uphill). It is the better exercise for them! I have not time to say one-half of what I wish, or to notice the particulars of your different letters. We are very much grieved that you have had so much perplexity and vexation about the note on Saragossa, and we (that is, we women) are exceedingly sorry that the sheet has been cancelled; for though we do not think that the note was *necessary* in that place, it does not seem to us that it could have done any harm, except what is always done by *any* note which stops the course of your reading an animated or eloquent passage. I know not what my Brother said to you; but sure I am that he did not in words utter any sentiment, any conjecture respecting your conceptions, which could have given you the slightest pain; therefore I conclude that he has expressed himself negligently in his hurry, and that you have misunderstood his meaning. I do not know what plan my Brother fixed upon for explaining that passage; but certainly it is necessary that it should be known how long the pamphlet has been in being finished, for the sake of *perspicuity*, if there were no other reason. It is very strange about that imperfect sentence. We have hunted out the MS. from which your copy was taken, and it is exactly as you say, leaving off at the word

'force.' It is astonishing how this could have escaped any of us, much more my Brother, who read it so often over. I have copied all the important parts of your letters relative to the Pamphlet, and send them by this Post to Kendal, and of course he will answer them, and you will receive his letter on Monday, for he will certainly come home by Kendal. We hear from Mrs. C. that Coleridge and Southey met William at Appleby on Saturday. C. is returned to Keswick, and goes with Southey to-morrow to Wokington Hall. I know nothing more, either of him or his 'Friend.'

"Mrs. Kelsall has written her 'long story' to me, and I hope I have so explained matters to her, that neither she nor I need give you any more trouble about that business. I am quite vexed with her for plaguing you, and at a time too when *we* are giving you such never-ending plague of another kind. Oh, how I shall rejoice for your sake, and for the sake of your poor head and eyes, when the pamphlet is fairly *published*! Till then I cannot be easy, for I shall never feel sure that William will not have some changes to make. But for Mrs. K.—I believe she suspects that we had some design to manufacture for our ourselves quilts, curtains, or other things out of the spoils of your house—at least, she did not give us credit for knowing anything about *economy*. I have, however, set myself off in that line as well as she can do, and I think she will be satisfied—at all events, I trust she will not trouble *you* any more. We are in great

spirits about the news from Spain — all well. Catherine is as lively as a bird, and looks better and better every day. If you thought Totty handsome before, you could say he is *beautiful* now. Mrs. C. tells us that William was at Penrith, and they all saw Dorothy. She cried to go with her Father to Appleby. I long to see her again, and to hear her dear lively voice in the house. John's pictures are put up in his own Bedroom, and he is very proud of them. We gave Thomas the Parson and the two Ladies, and it has taken its place in the Nursery below your works, the Giant's Castle and the Magician's Temple—Magician or Genius, I believe it is.—The Pamphlets came on Saturday Night. Decius looks so very dry that I have not heart to attack him. I have read Cevallos—also I have read Miss Smith's Translation of Klopstock's and Mrs. K.'s letters. I wish she had never translated them; for they disturb that beautiful image which you conceive of Mrs. K.'s character from the few letters to Richardson,—being full of indefinite breathings of Godliness—exclamations without end, and 'God' in every fourth line of a page.

"Klopstock's letters to her are of the same kind, but being a man's letters, and the letters of a man who has had such a high reputation, one cannot read them with the same indulgence. I never in my life read a Book in which there was so little sense or thought,—there is none, except in some of Mrs. K.'s letters, which have far more good in them than her Husband's.

“Hartley and Derwent are impatient to be gone with this letter. I write as fast as pen can go, but you are a ‘good scholar,’ and I hope can make it out. God bless you! We all beg our kindest love.—
Your ever-affectionate D. W.

“We have engaged an excellent servant for you, to come at Martinmas,—Mr. Lloyd’s cook, formerly our servant; but we must hire another to serve you till that time.—Might not your Brother have arrived before his time?

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

IV.

“*Sunday Afternoon, April 1809.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—Having an opportunity of sending a letter to Ambleside by Hartley and Derwent, I think it best to write a few lines for your satisfaction, though whether the Pamphlet be published or not, there is no *necessity* for writing, as I do not think it likely that you would have ‘Author of the L. B., &c.’ printed in the title-page, which must by no means be done. My Brother approves of your manner of disposing of Gen^l Ferguson. Let the ‘Corunna’ be omitted. I fear your labours will not be over to-morrow; but soon you must have rest, and we shall all be thankful. You have indeed been a treasure to us while you have been in London, having spared my Brother so much anxiety

and care. We are very grateful for your kindness. We received your paper—not the *Times*, but the *Globe*. We very much enjoyed the hissings of the people in the presence of their slavish Chief Magistrate and his Crew, but it is a pity they cannot conduct themselves with more temperance in their common Hall meetings. If the opposite Party had been suffered to speak, the cause of the People would have gained rather than lost.

“John is very proud of the pictures you have already sent. They are arranged with great taste in his Bedroom. William and Mary were at Lloyd’s on Friday, and stayed for the Post ; but we were not *much* disappointed at not hearing from you, supposing that you had not leisure, and that we should have a letter through Miss Crosthwaite yesterday evening. Accordingly my Brother went down to the carrier’s at nine o’clock, and brought home your letter. ‘Thank you again and again for writing such ‘nice letters.’ You can hardly guess what pleasure we have in receiving them. Coleridge is still at Keswick. He goes to Wokington Hall on Monday—was to have gone on Friday (with Southey), but, as usual, he caused the delay. You will have seen him advertised. Poor Soul ! he writes in bad spirits, and I have no hope. Adieu, my dear Friend.—Believe me ever affectionately yours,

“D. WORDSWORTH.

“Hartley and Derwent are impatient to be gone. It grieves me to send off a letter so little worth the

postage. Friday was the sweetest day we have had all this year. John was much delighted with your account of the art of printing. You do not mention your Brother.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY,

“No. 82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

V.

“GRASMERE, *Monday, May 1, 1809.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have just dismissed Johnny with his shame-faced smile, telling him that I wanted to be alone to write to Mr. de Quincey. I asked him what I should say for him, and he could think of nothing but that I should tell you to come back again, and even of that he was ashamed, and seemed to struggle with other thoughts which he could not utter, while he blushed all over his face. He is a happy creature, more joyous than ever, and yet more thoughtful. I am sure you will say he is much improved, and will perceive his mind opening before you when you resume your long conversations with him. Reading is now no longer a painful exertion to him, though certainly he does not make out his words without great difficulty—but he likes the exercise, not much yet for the sake of the matter contained in his Book, but *as* an exercise, and I do not doubt that in a little time he will be able to read without spelling, though he is slow in learning.

“I was called downstairs, and found Miss Hut-

chinson reading Coleridge's 'Christabel' to Johnny. She was tired, so I read the greatest part of it. He was excessively interested, especially with the first part, but he asked 'why she could not say her prayers in her own room,' and it was his opinion that she ought to have gone 'directly to her Father's room to tell him that she had met with the Lady under the old oak-tree and all about it.'

"My dear Friend, I felt a pang when you complained of not having heard from us for so long a time, though I had written a hurried letter on Friday, the day when we received yours. It appeared to me as if I had been ungrateful and unfeeling in not writing; at least that there might be something like social intercourse between us while your mind was vexed and harassed by the labour which for our sakes you have taken upon you, though I could not have hoped to be very entertaining; for what have I to tell you but of the goings-on of our quiet household?—We are indeed now a quiet family, wanting Sissy and, above all, Coleridge; who, though not noisy himself, makes a bustle in the house. Besides, we have been but little plagued with smoke lately, which makes us seem to have nothing to do but to sew, read, write, walk about and play with the Children for our pleasure. I often wish that you were here now, that you might know that we are not always oppressed with business and labour. But soon we are to have workmen again at the chimnies, and they will revive past miseries; but we do hope that they may do something to pre-

vent our suffering next winter as we suffered last; for we are assured by many persons that Register stoves will entirely cure the evil in the parlours, and we would gladly submit to the inconvenience of having the kitchen chimney pulled down (which we think will be the only effectual remedy)—but, alas! in two years more we fear we shall have to remove from this house, for Mr. Crump has taken a Cottage at Ambleside for the next summer, a proof that he wishes at least to spend the summer months among the Lakes; and what is to be gained by letting his own house and renting another? It will be very grievous to be disturbed again, if we *should* get the chimnies cured, after having had one whole year's trouble and discomfort; and *you* will be left in the lurch, for if we quit this house there is no prospect but of our quitting Grasmere, for there is not another shelter for us here. But this is anticipating evils, and foolishly too, when we have had so many actual evils of the same kind to endure. We are greatly concerned at the delay of the Pamphlet, but much more at your being detained in London too long and your having so much trouble. I will quit this subject with a hope that before the end of this week we may receive the parcel. By the bye, I hope you have had leisure to think about Johnny's pictures, for he expects them with impatience, and is very proud of those which he already possesses. My Brother has begun to correct and add to the poem of the 'White Doe,' and has been tolerably successful. He intends to finish it before he begins with any

other work, and has made up his mind, if he can satisfy himself in the alterations he intends to make, to publish it next winter, and to follow the publication by that of 'Peter Bell' and the 'Waggoner.' He has also made a resolution to write upon publick affairs in the *Courier* or some other newspaper, for the sake of getting money; not wholly, however, on that account, for unless he were animated by the importance of his subject and the hope of being of use, he could do nothing in that way. Coleridge, however, writes to desire that he will not withdraw himself from poetry, for he is assured that there will be no need of it, as he (Coleridge) can get money enough. I have indeed better hopes of him at present than I have had for this long time, laying together his own account of himself and the account which Mrs. C. gives us of him. He intends to go to Penrith on Wednesday to superintend the Press, therefore you may expect a visit from the *Friend* on Monday morning (I believe that is the day on which it will arrive in London). As to my Brother's writing for a newspaper, I do not much like the thought of it; but unless the Pamphlet (the most improbable thing in the world) should make his poems sought after, I know not how we can go on without his employing some portion of his time in that way—but the misfortune is that he cannot lay down one work and begin with another. It was never intended that he should make a trade out of his faculties. His thoughts have been much employed lately in the arrangement of his published poems, as he intends

to blend the four volumes together whenever they are reprinted—or should I say *if* ever? for we hear no more from Longman, and I believe that the two last volumes scarcely sell at all. This reminds me of the last *Edinburgh Review* which I saw at Mr. Wilson's. There never was such a compound of despicable falsehood, malevolence, and folly as the concluding part of the Review of Burns's Poems (which was, in fact, all I thought it worth while to read, being the only part in which my Brother's works are alluded to). It would be treating Mr. Jeffrey with too much respect to notice any of his *criticisms*; but when he makes my Brother censure himself, by quoting words as from his poems which are not there, I do think it is proper that he should be contradicted and put to shame. I mentioned this to my Brother, and he agrees with me; not that he could do it himself, but he thinks it would be well for you or some other Friend of his to do it for him—but in what way? I think a letter might be addressed to him in the *Edinburgh papers* and in one or two of the *London papers*. A private letter to himself would be of no use, and of course he would not *publish* any condemnation of himself in his own *Review*, if you were to call upon him to do so. I wish you would think about it. Mr. Wilson came to us on Saturday morning, and stayed till Sunday afternoon. William read the 'White Doe' and Coleridge's 'Christabel' to him, with both of which he was much delighted. He has promised to come again on Wednesday and stay all night, and my Brother,

in return, has promised to read ‘Peter Bell’ to him. They talked about going through Wales and thence into Ireland, and I do not think the scheme will drop; therefore you must hold yourself in readiness to meet them in Wales, if you should not be here at the time. Miss Hutchinson has some thoughts of going into Wales in June; in which case William would accompany her, and Mr. Wilson would either go along with them or follow them; but if Miss H. does not go into Wales so soon, they most likely will defer the journey till the Autumn, when you will, I hope, certainly be here.

“Do excuse this scrawl. I left the Parlour for the pleasure of being alone; and having no fire upstairs, I sate down in a sunny spot in a room without a table, and am writing with the writing-desk upon my knees,—a lazy trick, I will allow, but it will be to you a sufficient excuse for my bad penmanship. Mrs. Kelsall has sent a very pretty carpet for your new house—but we are not at all satisfied with the colour and pattern of the Calico for Bed-curtains, &c., and are, upon the whole, sorry that we did not make choice ourselves at Kendal. I am called away. I go unwillingly, for I wanted to fill my Paper. God bless you!—Believe me, my dear Friend, your affectionate

“DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

“I dare say my Sister will write to you soon, for the pleasure of writing, not to spare me trouble, for

I assure you it never can be a trouble to me to write to you. Again God bless you!

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

VI.

“GRASMERE, *Saturday, 6th May 1809.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot let Mr. Joneson go without a greeting from us to you, though my Brother and Miss Hutchinson wrote yesterday. I long for the Carrier’s return to-night, for assuredly we shall, at least, have a *letter* from you. Would that the Pamphlets might come too! William still continues to haunt himself with fancies about Newgate and Dorchester or some other gaol, but as his mind clings to the gloomy, Newgate is his favourite theme. We, however, have no fears, for even if the words be actionable (which I cannot but think they are not), in these times they would not dare to inflict such a punishment; above all, the infamy alluded to proceeding from the Convention of Cintra would only be increased thereby. Though the expense of cancelling the leaf and the consequent delay would be serious evils, what I should most grieve for would be your trouble and vexation.—I do not recollect that we want anything in London. Making presents is a very pleasant way of disposing of money; but, alas! that is a commodity in which we do not much abound, and whatever wishes we might have of that

sort we are forced to suppress.—Another week is gone by, and the *Friend* does not appear. Coleridge at first talked of printing upon unstamped paper, in case the stamped should not arrive in time; but in the last letter we had from him he says that is impossible. I suppose he has had some fresh information on the subject since he talked of the unstamped paper. The Paper was sent off from London some weeks ago, and has not yet arrived, and this is certainly an undeniable cause of delay; but I much fear that there is little done on Coleridge's part, and that he himself is not sorry that there should be an excuse in which he has no concern. He has written to London to desire that a sufficient quantity of paper for one number may be sent by the Coach, and it is his intention to go to Penrith next week to superintend the Press.

“Miss Hutchinson has told you that we are busy with the Cottage. I hope it will be a very nice place before you come to it, though the poor Laurels in the Garden have been so cruelly mauled by Atkinson that I fear they will never look like anything but dismembered creatures. John Fisher is very proud of his Post—he is gardener and steward; that is, overseer of the other workmen.

“The weather is now very delightful, and it is quite a pleasure to us to go down to the old spot and linger about as if we were again at home there. . . .

“My dear Friend, I am ashamed of this blotted letter—you will say I always write in a hurry, and indeed I plead guilty; but you must take it as a

proof of affection that my penmanship is so bad, for in proportion as my Friends have become more near and dear to me I have always been unable to keep my pen in such order as to make it write decently. When I wrote the first page of this letter Tom was plaguing me, and I hardly knew what I was doing. That is the cause of the superabundance of mistakes and blots; and latterly I have been expecting every moment to be called down to Tea. After Tea I shall walk to Ambleside with my letter. Mr. Joneson goes off to-morrow. William and I walked to A. last night, and were somewhat disappointed at not receiving a letter from you. Adieu. God bless you! —Believe me ever your affectionate Friend,

“DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

“We have not seen the Proclamation, or Address, or whatever it is, of the Juntas respecting Saragossa. —The Carpet is not yet arrived.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

VII.

“GRASMERE, *Thursday, June 25.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is so long since we have heard from you, that I cannot help writing to inquire after you, though I have only time to scribble a few lines. Mrs. Cookson of Kendal has been spending a week with us, and she is just going away, and will carry my letter to the Post Office. Sometimes we

fancy that you are on the point of setting off to Grasmere, and therefore have delayed writing, and at times too, being of a fearful temper, fancy that you are ill; but I think it is most probable that you are so much engaged with your own Family as not to have time to write a long letter, and that you do not think it worth while to send a short one; but whatever may have hitherto been the cause of your silence, do write, if but three lines to tell us how you are, and when we are likely to see you again. We have been so long used to receive your letters regularly that we take very ill to this long privation of that pleasure. My Brother is this morning gone out upon a fishing party with Mr. Wilson and his 'Merry Men,' as William calls them. They have a tent and large store of provisions, and they intend to travel from one town to another and lodge in their tent upon the mountains. Mr. Wilson intends to spend a week in this manner, but how long William will stay I know not—most likely he will be tired before the end of the week. At all events Mr. Wilson is to be ready with his boats next Thursday, and we are to spend that day together in Windermere, the day of dear Dorothy's return. Miss Weir and D. and the Cooksons are to meet us at Bowness. We have had some wet weather; but it is now perfect summer again, and we have several happy days in the open air. On Monday we went to Coniston in a Cart, and ate our dinner in a field near the Lake—we wished for you.

“Your Cottage is painted, and I hope will be ready

by the end of the next week or the beginning of the week after. It will be very beautiful next summer, but this year's roses have been almost all destroyed with repairing the rough-cast and whitewashing the outer walls. Ned Wilson has made deal Bookcases, but in consideration of your having mentioned Mahogany for the Book-shelves, we have got all the rest of the furniture of Mahogany. We were doubtful about it before, the native woods being at present so very dear, but your mention of Mahogany, and the consideration that in case you should leave the country and have a Sale, decided us; for no sort of wood sells so well at second-hand as Mahogany. We advise you to purchase a stock of tea before you come, the tea sold here being very bad and very dear—we always get ours from London. You must also bring silver spoons.

“Johnny improves daily; he is certainly the sweetest creature in the world; he is so very tender-hearted and affectionate. He longs for your return, and I think he will profit more than ever by your conversation, though great was the improvement that you wrought in him; indeed he owes more to you than to any one else for the softening of his manners. He is not famous for making extraordinary speeches, but I must tell you one pretty thing that he said the other day. His Mother and he were walking in the lane, and, looking at the daisies upon the turf, he said, ‘Mother, the poor little daisies are forsaken now.’ ‘Forsaken, Johnny! What for?’ ‘Well, because there are so many

other pretty flowers.'—Now for a specimen of his logic, having given you one of his poetical fancy. He came running to me with 'Aunt, may I tell you what? Chips are water.' 'Water! how's that, Johnny?' 'Well,' he replied, 'you know when chips are burnt in the fire, they go up into the clouds in smoke, and the clouds make rain, so chips are water, and I told Sally that she was washing me in chips.' He was much entertained with this last original joke, but the other part of the process seemed to delight him as a *discovery*. Adieu, my dear Friend. God bless you! You will be right welcome to Grasmere again.—Yours most affectionately,

D. W.

"Coleridge has been with us nearly a fortnight; he is in good spirits, and going on with his work. Of course you have seen his second number; there were a few things in it which gave us pain, and we wished he had abided more closely to his promise. We have heard from several quarters that the pamphlet has made considerable impression—I mean among a few. Sometimes I have been afraid that the carrier lost my last letter to you. It was directed to Clifton. I should be sorry for this, as it was a long letter, though perhaps not very entertaining. Do write immediately.

"Coleridge has desired me to open my letter to beg you to bring the Sanscrit MS. and his logical manuscripts.

"THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,
"Wington."

VIII.

"GRASMERE, 7th July 1809.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I hope I am not too late in replying to your kind proposal of looking out for us in the collection of old Books. I should have written immediately, but I was in hopes that my Brother would make out a sort of Catalogue of his wants or wishes; but the former include so much that the task seems to be altogether unnecessary. This Library is in fact little more than a chance collection of odd books (setting aside the poets and a few other Books that are to be found everywhere), therefore in general I may say that he wants all that is valuable that can be procured *very cheap* (alas! if this last consideration could have been dispensed with, he would not now have had so small a stock of Books)—Clarendon—Burnet—any of the elder Histories—translations from the Classics, chiefly Historical—Plutarch's Lives—Thucydides—Tacitus (I think he said)—(by the bye, he *has* a Translation of Herodotus)—Lord Bacon's Works—Milton's Prose Works—in short, any of the good elder writers—but (having looked over your friend's books with this key) if you will send a list of such as you think may suit my Brother, with the probable prices, he will make his choice among them.—I write in great haste, not to lose the post, and my Brother is not here to help my memory; but I hope I have said enough to

give you a general notion of what we wish for most. In our walk last night we numbered over many books that we should like to have, but I took down no notes, and at this moment I cannot recall them.

“I will not speak of our sorrow for your Illness—you are recovered now, and we rejoice in thankfulness. At any time, and as soon as ever it suits you, we shall be most glad to see you. We are *settled* in our new house, where we have plenty of room and quietness for you. You may always have a sitting-room below stairs, and a bedroom above to yourself. All are well—the Children delighted with the liberty and freedom of wandering up and down the green Fields without fear of carriages or horses.—With kind love from my Brother and Sister, I am, dear Sir, your affectionate Friend,

“DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

“Do excuse this scrawl. My Brother wishes very much to have Josephus’s writings. How grievous if I am too late with this letter!—Pray write and tell us when to expect you.”

IX.

A little later she writes:—

“It is a heavenly morning. We are all a Family party. Thomas, Catherine, and Johnny, whom we shall call on at school going to the Town-End, where your snowdrops are in full blossom to welcome us. William and I proceed to the post at Rydale, where we hope to find a letter from you. I am

afraid you would hardly be able to make out what I wrote last night about the Manchester Goods. Adieu.—Yours ever, D. WORDSWORTH.”

X.

“GRASMERE, 1st August 1809.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is now my turn to cast reproaches upon myself for my long silence, and of these I have not been sparing, though a bustling, unsettled life for some weeks past has always furnished me with a present excuse, when the time came which I had beforehand fixed upon for writing to you. My last letter crossed *your* last but one upon the road. I have since received a very kind one from your Mother’s house. It is, I believe, a month ago, and you then talked of being at Grasmere in three weeks; but we did not much expect you so soon, as no doubt your Mother and Sisters will be unwilling to part with you. I hope, however, that now the time of your coming draws near—your house is quite ready, or rather it will be so in two or three days, for the bed-curtains are not yet put up, but a woman is now making them, and I believe before the end of the week all the furniture will be come. The garden looks fresh and very pretty, in spite of the cruel injury done to the trees by Atkinson’s unruly axe. We have had a delightful summer, and if you had not lately been so happy in the enjoyment of a beautiful country and the society of your own family, we should have regretted

that you were not here. We have had a houseful of company—Southey and some friends of his—a succession of Lakers and Miss Weir and her Niece and Mr. George Hutchinson have been with us for more than a Month; and Mr. Clarkson and his Son and a friend of his have spent several days with us. This will explain to you the nature of our bustling life; and, besides, I have been at Kendal, where I stayed twelve days, and purchased all the articles of Kitchen furniture and other things which could be bought in shops ready-made for your Cottage. I carried your last Letter with me, intending to answer it; but I never found leisure, and unluckily I packed the letter in my Trunk, which is not yet arrived, and I have forgotten the address; so, as the carriers are often slow in bringing goods from the warehouse, it may yet be several days before I shall be able to send this letter off; and this same unlucky contrivance of mine has prevented my Sister from writing to you, for, thinking that I should probably not find time to write while I was at Kendal, she would have written, but as I had your letter with me, she could not, having also forgotten your last address. . . . Coleridge has been very busy of late, and his health and spirits are better; he has sent off the 3rd and 4th numbers of the *Friend*, and is at work daily. He desires me to say that he is exceedingly glad that you have got that book of Bruno. Can you have access to a series of any of the *Reviews*?—for instance, the *Edinburgh* from the first, or the *Monthly*. If you

can, and if you have time, Coleridge would be very glad if you would look them through and note down any gross blunders in logical or moral reasoning which you may detect, and any gross misapplication of praise or blame to names whose Fame is already established.—My Brother has been much depressed by the Austrian defeat and the Armistice, though he says he expected no better, that it was his wishes rather than his hopes that kept him alive to the Cause before. He has not done anything of late; indeed we have had so much company that it was scarcely possible for him to feel sufficiently independent to devote himself to composition. I have not heard of the pamphlet having been received, and I took the pains when I was at Kendal of going to the Book Club to look at the last Reviews. By the Bye, of reviews—Have you seen the *Edinburgh* Review of Campbell's Poem? I know not whether the Extracts brought forward in illustration of the encomiums or the encomiums themselves are more absurd. There surely can be little sense left in the Nation, or Master Jeffrey must very soon write himself into disgrace. The Review of Miss Hannah More's Work is equally as foolish, though in a different way.—The children are all well, your pupil as sweet as the best of them, though not quite so handsome. She wears no cap and has no hair—her Father calls her his little Chinese Maiden. She has the funniest laugh you ever saw peeping through her eyes; and she is as good-tempered as ever.—Dorothy is beautiful,

and a delightful creature when she behaves well; but I am sorry to add that she is very wayward, and I fear we shall have great trouble in subduing her. She is quick at her book, and quick at everything. John is made up of good and noble feelings,—he is the Delight of everybody who knows him—all his playmates love him; he blushes and looks pleased whenever your return is talked off. Last night, when he had finished his prayers, in which he makes a petition for his ‘good Friends,’ he said, ‘Mr. de Quincey is one of my Friends.’—Little Tom has been poorly and looks ill—he often lisps out your name, and will rejoice with the happiest at your return. I must remind you of a promise which you made to Johnny to bring him a new hat. I bought one for Tom at Kendal, but remembering that you said you would bring John one, I did not buy one for him. Let it be a black hat, if you have not already bought one of another colour.—Some chests of Books for you are arrived, also the Smoke dispenser; but we have not yet got it put up. It will be done next week, when a Workman from Liverpool is coming to try his skill upon the Chimnies. If you should come next week you will probably find your house occupied, for we have offered it to Mr. and Mrs. Crump for a week or ten days, they being desirous to look about them at Grasmere. We are well assured that you would have done the same if you had been here, and that you will feel glad in having had this opportunity of obliging two worthy people. If you should come

while they are here, you will think it no great evil, as we have plenty of room for you at Allan Bank ; but I fear there is no likelihood that you will come so very soon—only let me entreat that you will not let the trees lose their leaves before you see them again. Besides, you know you are to be of the party into Wales and Ireland. Miss H. still thinks of going. My Brother will accompany her ; and he and Mr. Wilson continue to talk of going into Ireland, and they hope that if they do go you will not draw back. They have not fixed a time, but I do not think it will be before September. Now, if you do not come soon, it will be hardly worth while to come at all till the Irish journey is over, and I am very sorry to think of that ; but yet, for the sake of a week or two in this country, it would be a pity to come so far, when you could meet them so nicely in Wales. Do write and tell us all your plans ; and if you now think of coming immediately, do not put off on account of this Welsh and Irish scheme, as the latter very *probably* may never be executed, and the former possibly. Adieu, my dear Friend. God bless you ! D. WORDSWORTH.

“Excuse scrawling ; I have had a bad pen. Do write immediately. Remember to bring spoons and Tea. I have said nothing about the pony, for I think you will hardly prevail upon your Brother to part with it, and it would be almost a pity that you should.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Wrighton, near Bristol.”

XI.

Here are some extracts from a very long letter dated Grasmere, August 20, 1809 :—

“Our little Darling is quite well, but is become much thinner since she began to walk; she has been able to walk all over the house ever since the second week after you left home. My Sister would tell you this, in all probability, and that she walked very lame. Her lameness, I think, gradually wears off, but I am so much accustomed to see it that I am not a competent judge how this may be; certain I am that for the last week or ten days she has been at a stand, owing to her being weakened by the effort of cutting her *two last teeth*. After these are out I trust she will go on improving. She is completely left-handed, in spite of a dreadful sore finger which she has upon her left hand, that was cut and bruised by the flapping of one of the doors. I have often confined her left arm, which is no distress to her, as she is well able to use the right; but as this confinement causes her to get more tumbles, and when down to be unable to rise without help, I am going to contrive a muffle for her fingers, which I expect will answer the purpose of obliging her to use her right hand. You have no need to be apprehensive that she will forget you—though I believe I am a much more formidable rival to you than before you left us, for at one time she was

obliged to be constantly with me, and nothing was done for her by any other person; this had made her a most intolerable mother's pet, and I most earnestly wish you were at home, were it only to wean her from me a little,—for her fondness of me causes her much misery, as she is never happy but when I am paying her attention; and as this cannot always be the case, she is often unhappy, and I, of course, disturbed and confined more than I should be if you were here to share with me this over-fondness. She still looks sharply round when your name is mentioned, and every day she is *for a time* kept quiet, while we are rubbing her, when we say that she shall 'ride away to London to meet Mr. de Quincey;' she will then sing to the motion of our knees and, till she grows weary, be contented. She fully expects you to bring her a doll, so I pray you not to disappoint her; but as it will not live many hours after it comes into her possession, I beg you may not waste above twopence or threepence upon it. She makes very little progress in talking, though she uses her tongue perpetually—a word of her own, that sounds like *Kisleea*, she is constantly repeating; it is of universal use to her, for if she is angry it is *Kisleea*, and if she is happy she goes singing about in the archest, prettiest manner you can conceive, 'Ah! Kisleea; ah! Kisleea,' for five or ten minutes together. I often wish you could see her. And then she is the nicest maker of a Curtsey you ever beheld! I hope she will not have left off this practice when you come, for you would be delighted

to see. She calls me Mama—the first of them that ever used this word. She has never been taught it, and I cannot make her say anything like Mother,—she *could* say it distinctly at one time. There is nothing entertains her so much as the form and motion of a Butterfly; she follows them about the room (for we often have them in the Study) with her eyes, and almost exhausts herself with laughing at them. She is a merry little creature, and, I think, grows prettier every day. I will not tell you what a fine fellow your Godson is, as it was only an after-thought your inquiring for him. All the rest will be delighted at your return. John was in ecstasies when I read him from your letter that his Artillery was not forgotten. D. talks for ever about her Doll. C. went through every room in the Cottage the other day to seek you. She even pulled off the counterpane to see if you were in bed, and Mary said she looked very strange and put her fingers in her mouth when she could not find you.

“Mrs. Wilson and her Daughters and Miss Jane Penny and Mr. Wilson were here last week; they came in part to see me and in part to avail themselves of the privilege which you had given them to see your Cottage. After drinking Tea at Allan Bank we all repaired to the Town-end, and had a nice supper and drank your health in the little Parlour, and, after staying as long as I durst from my Baby, Mrs. W., Miss Eliz., and myself returned to sleep—leaving the others in possession of your House. After enjoying themselves for some time, the Ladies

went to your Beds; and Mr. W., to be at hand in attendance, occupied Peggy Ashburner's. They came up to Breakfast here, and afterwards left the Vale very much delighted with their visit—a long account of which no doubt you will hear when next you meet Mrs. Wilson.

“Our Vale is now terribly infested by a horde of the Astley tribe, part of which harbour in Robert Newton's Cottage. I am sadly frightened that some of these, or other gentry of the like kind, may purchase Butterlip now, which is advertised to be sold publickly some time next month, or privately before that time by applying to Mr. Wilcock. I fear we shall be far *outbid* if it comes to public sale, but Mary Dawson says that she ‘is sure you will buy it.’ It will be a grievous thing if it falls into bad hands. What do you think of Mr. Astley having made a stately gateway to his house, with a second road (this new one fitted for a carriage) up to the house? . . .—I am, my dear Sir, your sincere Friend,

M. W.

“I suppose ‘Mr. Kelsall, Manchester,’ is sufficient address to find your Friend.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Westhay, Wrington, near Bristol.”

XII.

“ELLERAY [*September 12, 1809*].

“MY DEAR SIR,—I told my Sister, when I parted from her at Ambleside, on my way hither, last Friday morning, that I should write to you before my return home. I then felt as if I should send you a very long letter; but, alas! the time has passed away and I have not written, and have perhaps, by my promise, prevented *her* writing. I must now merely content myself with adding a few words to the end of Mr. Wilson’s letter to tell you that your last long and kind letter gave us all great pleasure, and that it deserved a more ready and worthy answer. I believe Dorothy would have written sooner had you not promised that we should hear from you again in four days. We have been looking for *that* letter—and since for your arrival. When are we to see you? All has been in readiness for you, and every one of us wishing to see you for a long, long time. I think William will not go into Wales; if my sister Sara leaves us this Autumn, she must be fetched by my Brother. Mr. Wilson (as he has, I dare say, told you) is going into Spain, so he cannot be one of her attendants. Coleridge has been very busy lately. You have received the 4th No., and will be glad to hear that the 5th and 6th are in the Printer’s hand. He has, of course, been in more comfortable health. Heaven grant this may

last! Mr. W. is with me here, as is your friend John, who, being such a favourite with Mr., Mrs., and Miss Wilson, and having so much of his own way and such a variety of good things to eat, is in such a state of happiness, that he appears in a Character so different from his own, that, had you never seen him before, you might suppose him to be a sort of half-idiot; but in all humours he is glad to talk of his dear Friend. William is in admirable health. I hope we shall hear a good account of yours. God bless you! I am writing while the Family are sitting round me at supper.—We go home in the morning, and shall perhaps meet with some intelligence from you.—Believe me to be, with much love and esteem, your affectionate Friend,

M. W.”

XIII.

“ELLERAY, *Sunday Evening, 18th Nov.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—We have just received your Note with respect to poor Aggy Black. I am sorry to say that my Sister has had no letter from Mr. Crump, but she wrote yesterday to Miss Crump requesting an immediate answer. We do not know what to augur from Mr. Crump’s silence. I hope it does not proceed from his not intending to let the house at all, because Mary desired him to write immediately to inform her whether it was to let or not. I hope, therefore, it is only that he has been busy, and put

off writing. Pray tell Aggy Black this, and that my Sister will certainly have an answer from Miss Crump on Friday night if Miss C. writes immediately, as Mary desired her to do. You do not mention your own health, therefore I hope you are better. William groans on the projected change in the Ministry. We have not yet received to-night's papers, therefore we have at present no later news than you have already got ; but we shall have papers to-night, and if there be any news in them I will set it down for your amusement, keeping my letter open for that purpose ; but, for my part, I am sick of expecting the great Battle.

“We are much concerned at the spreading of the fever, rather the continuance of it in Walker's house, which I fear will be followed by a further spreading ; for people are so incautious and foolish—especially that Family of the Walkers. I sent a letter to Sarah this evening enclosed to Mrs. Ross, and I desired Robert Joneson to convey it to her, and to read it for her information. In that letter I desired Sarah to make us some white Bread. I am sorry she has no yeast ; I hope, however, to be able to send her some from Ambleside to-morrow. We shall make application to Mrs. Green. The news contained in your Note, received this evening, has determined us to stay a week longer at Elleray ; therefore Sarah must not reckon upon our being at home before this day fortnight. I desired her *not* to send us more butter, but as our stay will be longer than we had intended this morning, we wish

her to send the next time she churns. She must also send us a pot of Preserves, and if the Chest of Tea should arrive from London, she may open it and send one pound of black tea. Pray give our love to Sarah, and tell her that we are sorry to think of her loneliness. I hope, however, she is now more comfortable, being a little used to it; and tell her she must comfort herself with mending her cloaks. Pray ask Sarah if she wants money; if she does, be so good as to let her have 5 or 10 shillings, or whatever she may want. Pray when you write tell us how her health is, and if she has been always quite well since we left Grasmere. I close in haste.
—Always your affectionate Friend,

“D. WORDSWORTH.”

The effort made by Mr. Stopford Brooke to secure funds to purchase Dove Cottage, so frequently referred to in these letters, has anew called public attention to the little place, situated among scenery so lovely, and hallowed by associations so dear to every lover of literature. A recent writer in the *Westmorland Gazette*, in the ninth of a series of papers on the Valleys of Westmorland, describes “Grasmere” in language simple and effective, and, after quoting the poet and De Quincey on Dove Cottage, gives his own impressions of a recent visit paid to it:—

“That no fatal change has been made in the rooms is true in a modified degree only. We must say at once that the place is kept in the most ‘sweet

and orderly' condition. The old-fashioned plants still cling around the place. The 'garden,' with its almost reckless perfume of wild and semi-wild flowers; its winding steps cut out of the rocky land behind by Wordsworth himself, and the outside of the structure are little changed. But not so the inside. We were most courteously shown over the place by a 'sweetly gracious' cicerone, and found that the fine old oak wainscoting had many years ago been painted a dirty brown colour, the slight carving obscured; the upper drawing-room used as a bedroom; the seat in the window of the little 'study' where the poet composed 'blocked up;' one blind room shut up; and, in fact, as far as possible the entire place 'renovated,' with the idea of accommodating lodgers during the summer months. As such it was a model of neatness and 'tidiness,' which was more than could be said of the famous Burns' Cottage, for many years desecrated by the sale of whisky and drunken revelry, as our readers are aware. Wordsworth composed very little in his 'study' or anywhere else within doors, and there are but few references in all his poetry to Dove Cottage: . . . but the 'Farewell,' as our readers are aware, was written by Wordsworth in 1802, when he left Dove Cottage temporarily for Stockton-on-Tees, to marry Mary Hutchinson. The first two verses may be quoted:—

'Farewell, thou little nook of mountain ground,
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare:

Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
Farewell ! we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
Thee and the cottage, which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
And there will safely ride when we are gone ;
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
Will prosper though untended and alone ;
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none ;
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon ;
Here are they in our sight—we have no more.' ”

CHAPTER XV.

RICHARD DE QUINCEY.

THE Opium-Eater, in writing of the effect which his own revolt from the orders of his guardians, in escaping from the Manchester Grammar School, may have had on his younger brothers, deprecates the idea that his conduct had any share in determining theirs, as his mother seems to have feared that it would; and he thus refers in that connection to his brother Richard:—

“Without thinking of my example,” he writes, “under very different circumstances, my brother won his own emancipation in ways suggested by his own views and limited by his own resources; he got afloat upon the wide, wide world of ocean; ran along a perilous seven-years’ career of nautical romance; had his name almost blotted out from all memories in England; became of necessity a pirate among pirates; was liable to the death of a pirate wherever taken; then suddenly, on a morning of battle, having effected his escape from the bloody flag, he joined the English storming-party at Monte Video, fought under the eye of Sir Home Popham, the Commodore, and within twenty-four hours after the victory was rated as a midshipman on board

the *Diadem* (a 64-gun ship), which bore Sir Home's flag."

It appears that Mrs. de Quincey, very probably for reasons much the same as had led her to remove Thomas from the Bath Grammar School to Winkfield, removed Richard from a school where he was happy and well-contented, and placed him under the charge of a kind of teacher who has now, we should hope, ceased to exist. He believed in corporal punishment, and illustrated his belief by his practice. He mercilessly flogged Richard for some very venial fault or no fault at all, and Richard immediately ran from school, and tramped to Liverpool—a distance of some miles. But there he was, by the keeper of an inn where he had sought refreshment, brought before the Mayor, detected, and given up to his guardians; and no sooner was he safe in school again than the master—who had unctuously professed sorrow at the result of his former castigation—proceeded to flog him for injuring his school and his reputation, as he said, by running away as he had done. Richard was very soon on the road to Liverpool again; but this time he did not even seek for rest or refreshment of any kind, but made straight to the docks, and there at once engaged himself to the captain of a privateer, with whom he sailed for some months; after that becoming cabin-boy to a South-Sea whaler belonging to Lord Grenville, and with the captain of this ship he remained for some two years or more, picking up as much of navigation and seamanship as he

could. He was twice in England during these years, but so great was his fear of once more falling into the hands of his guardian, that he sought to see none of his own people. After the death of this man he joined another ship, a merchantman, and after a severe battle with pirates off the coast of Peru, he was taken prisoner by them, and preserved only on account of the aid they discovered that he could render them in navigation, &c. He sailed with the pirates for the next two years, and in the chapter "My Brother Pink" some details are given of the peculiar positions in which he found himself. He escaped from the pirates, and joined the storming-party at Monte Video under Sir Home Popham, as has been told, and so distinguished himself that he was at once rated as a midshipman in the navy. From the *Diadem* he was transferred to the fire-ship *Prometheus* at the time of the last Copenhagen expedition, and was active in the bombardment of that capital; but venturing some short time after, with some comrades, to land on the coast of Jutland, he was taken prisoner by the Danes, and lay in durance for some time before an exchange of prisoners was effected. But during this imprisonment he was treated with the utmost kindness, and chiefly mourned the loss of time. His disappearance caused the deepest grief and anxiety to his mother, who had done all that could be done in the way of inquiry; waiting patiently month by month in hopes of hearing from him, and when hope deferred had made the heart sick, scanning every newspaper in

which any record might be made of the ship in which he was believed to have sailed. Her letters from the date of his disappearance bear marks of the fond mother's heart dwelling more on the absent or lost than on those present, circling, as it were, round the empty nest, only to have the heart-burning and regret perpetually renewed. Truly, the Spanish proverb was realised in her case: "He that hath sons or sheep can never be at rest."

I.

"BATH, 19th March 1804.

"MY VERY DEAR HENRY,—You will begin to think you have no Mother from my very long silence; this silence, however, has so little proceeded from forgetfulness of you, my child, that it has made me think of you almost continually during a long season of hurry and frequent trouble. Long before I left Chester I was full of business, and thought I would write when it was over and I had a prospect of staying any time in a place, and since I have been here I have till lately been uncertain where I should go, or how long I should remain here; at last, however, I am going to Hinckley to your Sister Mary, and have taken a furnished House for a year. The slowness of your Sister's recovery made me determine on this measure, as I found also that her spirits were a great deal sunk by an afflicting relapse when she thought herself almost well.

“You will be glad to hear that I have really a House, where I hope to have you at the next Holidays. I do not forget that I heard with great concern that Mr. Hewitt had had occasion to punish you for deception last Midsummer, and I hope you are sorry for your offence, which is a very grievous one indeed. If you are angry at chastisement instead of sorry for deserving it, you make your offence twofold ; but I trust and pray, my dear Henry, that you will not be of that temper. If you do not understand its danger and malignity, you have an example of it so very near to you that I think you cannot well miss seeing ; your unhappy Brother Richard has finally resisted every means by which he might have been brought back to his family and his duty. Your Uncle has written Letters to him full of temperate and affectionate offers of receiving him, but he absolutely rejects everything, and will return on no condition, as far as we can understand his Letters, but that of being his own Master, a condition which neither the Laws of the Land nor the inclination of his Guardians allow them to accede to. In consequence of our refusing these extraordinary terms of the poor deluded Boy’s, he is actually gone to the South Seas, a voyage of the utmost hardships, and in an employment as mean as being a Collier, though not as wicked as being a Privateer-man. Thus, my dear Henry, you may see to what lengths a rebellious spirit can carry a person ; a Boy with Richard’s pride, who fancied himself equal to the first in society, and was disgusted

with the thoughts of the condition *even* of his own family, and of everything in the shape of rule, voluntarily sinks himself to be the companion of common Sailors, submits to the very tight discipline of a ship, and the orders of a coarse Captain but a few, if any, degrees above his own Crew. This sad choice of poor Richard's, you may be sure, has been and is a very great unhappiness to me. I pray God that He may give you grace not only to act differently, but that you may early choose and embrace a religious life, and then you will choose to do what is right, whatever way of life you enter upon as means to get your living honestly. Your brother Thomas has entered at Oxford; he has been there about three months.

"I should be glad to hear from you, my dear Henry, soon; I leave this place in about ten days, but you had better not send your Letter here unless you have anything particular to say. If you have, direct to the Post-Office, but don't write here after the 26th of this month—my direction will be at Hinckley, Leicestershire. When you come home for the holidays, I shall inquire whether you have thought about what you would like to be; I would have you think of it before that time.

"Your Uncle is in Town purposing to take his passage out to India directly, and most likely I shall see him again but for a very short time.

"My dear child, pray make my best respects to Mr. Hewitt, and say that I have the recollection that he wrote in your last Letter to me, but all my

Letters are packed up except those I have received in Bath, and if there was anything in it that I ought to make an answer to, I really cannot, but must beg him to accept my acknowledgments, and request him also with Mrs. H. to receive my good wishes.

“I hope your poor eyes keep tolerably well. Pray tell me all about yourself when you write. Charles Pratt is at school at Hammersmith, and is determined to be a clergyman, and Joseph is at College, and Mr. Pratt you know has taken orders. I have not heard him preach, but I have read many of his sermons, and excellent they are; he is keeping Terms at Cambridge for a degree. Mr. Hewitt will tell you, if you ask him, what this means. It is odd enough that both Father and son are at the University together. Tell Mr. Hewitt I have this day had a present made me by a very Pious Clergyman (Mr. Vansittart) of Sir James Stonehouse’s ‘Every Man’s Assistant and the Sick Friend.’ It appears to me a most excellent book. A set of religious Clergymen have united and printed off a thousand copies of it just now. My dearest Henry, may God bless you and give you His Grace is the constant prayer of your very affectionate Mother, E. QUINCEY.

“Jane is very well. Have I not written you a Letter long enough? Poor Mr. Kelsall has been extremely ill. Doctor Bridges has inquired very kindly after you, and of your improvement. You know he is a very elegant Scholar, as well as a good

Christian. Those entertaining Tours in the *Christian Observer* in the Alps describing the Monastery of the Chartroux are his. He used to write every night what he had seen and heard in the day, so that all the descriptions are what the Writer witnessed the realities of the very day he wrote, not what he recollected after.

“ Master HENRY QUINCEY,

“ Rev. Rd. Hewitt’s,

“ Lever, near Bolton, Lancashire.”

II.

“ HINCKLEY, *June 5, 1804.*

“ MY DEAR THOMAS,—If the mountain of Papers surrounding you admits of an approach, I mean to keep my word and acquaint you in a long letter with Family Affairs, which I hope and trust nothing will make you lose an interest in. When at Portsmouth I could not help endeavouring to trace poor Richard, however little at first I seemed likely to gain anything for my pains but disappointment.

“ Contrary, however, to expectation, our very first visit to Gosport gave us all the information to be had about him—I wish I could say all the comfort we could hope. Amidst a score or two of Men who ply and pester one to death for a fare across the River, your Uncle and I agreed to go with a Prussian whose countenance we liked, and as soon as we were seated in his Boat, upon asking how to find the Cap^{tn} of the *Dart* Privateer, and explain-

ing as far as was needful our motives for searching after him, the Prussian said he knew the Boy we were interested for, and had himself put a letter for him into the Post-Office for a Gentleman at Bath. From this man, both intelligent and apparently a very good character, we heard little more than we knew, that Richard was gone to the South Seas, except that he led us to the Captain he first sailed with. As soon as we found him and he understood that I was the poor Boy's mother he wept, and altogether seemed, beside this show of tenderness, a respectable Man, and one whom I felt it a blessing for your Brother to have been under. He said he found the Boy in the Street ready to perish, and he had given him bread, and in compliance with his piteous entreaties, consented to take him on board his Ship; that he soon suspected Richard's education and connections to be more than he acknowledged, and in consequence of this suspicion gave him a seat at his own table, where from the manner of holding his knife and fork he was further convinced that, as his habits did not accord with his outward meanness, he had absconded from his home. To this effect he put a direct question to Richard in Latin, which he answered in the same language, owning that the Captain was right. He proceeded to say he had given him all the indulgences he could have given to his son, and that being obliged to give up the Privateer from want of success, he had recommended Richard to his Brother, with whom he had sailed in a South-Sea

Whaler, with similar indulgences, and by whom he would be taught both the theory and practice of navigation. Moreover, he added that his Brother, though it might not become him to be his eulogist, was as good a Man as ever had the command of a ship. The Captain put in (in a parenthesis) that they had found Richard naked and had clothed him.

“Two or three times during our conversation your Uncle observed my hand going towards my pocket, and always gave me a look to wait a little, which the entrance of a stranger and what passed on the occasion convinced me was at least prudent counsel. This man knew Richard, had sailed in the Privateer as steward, an ill-looking fellow and a bad character; he was beginning to speak against Richard, upon which we observed the Captain put his finger on his lip to make the talker desist, and he said no more. I should have said before that the Captain had given your Brother a very good character, and that *his* looks were as much in his favour as the steward’s were against him. The Captain’s character also is good and the Steward’s bad.

“Greatly dissatisfied with this sort of apparent collusion, we went away. Our Prussian was waiting for us in the street, to whom we communicated what had passed, and he immediately (though he had before seemed to know nothing, or had chosen to be reserved) said the Captain’s account of his behaviour to Richard was not true; that, instead of giving him the best situation he could in his

ship, he was only the Cabin Boy, and remained in that capacity without a chance of learning navigation at that moment in his Brother's ship. This you are to know is a state of degradation which gives even a Foremast Man a right to look down upon it. The Cabin Boy cleans knives and shoes, and scours everything that is dirty, and waits at table instead of sitting at it. The Prussian, who seemed to know very well what he said, added that the Captain had allowed Richard to dine in the Cabin after he and his Officers had dined; but he continued, 'As a poor Man and a Stranger, I would rather lead you to others for information than have you rest on my word.'

"He then led your Uncle to a Shipping Agent and Banker in Gosport who knew Richard, and while he was stirring up his memory to communicate all he had known, the Captain presented himself. The Gentleman then referred to him as the fountain of intelligence on Richard's subject, and your Uncle said 'the Captain had already given him as much as he chose to part with, but as he kept something back, the Boy's friends were extremely anxious to trace it out.' The Captain then with perfect composure, said 'he had kept nothing back but what he thought would overwhelm the Mother, namely, that Richard had during his service in his Ship, while they were in Port, made his escape, and that he had himself rescued him from very bad company—company of the very worst order that Gosport produces—and that he had used

such methods to reclaim him as he would have done with a Son of his own.' This was a natural, though grievous way of accounting for his reserve, and for his stopping the Steward, who, the Captain said, was going to tell of Richard's sad situation at that time. Your Uncle then went to another person, who was beginning the very same story as the Prussian, when the Captain again accidentally appeared, as was most likely, to direct the communication himself. The result, if a result it can be called, I think is, that these two Captains found an unfortunate child, perishing under his rebellion, and too proud to stoop in the right place, was willing to sell himself as a slave; they were willing to buy him, and even to avail themselves of his wretchedness to secure his services below the usual price, which it does not appear that the food and clothes reach, for as Cabin Boy he ought to have some wages, and they are, moreover, desirous to have the praise for a very benevolent action. The voyage which my unhappy Son is now taken for will be two years at least, and is a frightful period, which, beside all he *may* gain and all he *must* lose, must be passed without any means of serving him here, and in which his repentance cannot avail till it is finished. Were he a Foremast man he would learn practical Navigation at least. This is a mournful tale which may well fill us with sorrow, and leaves us only the single and important duty of prayer for the deliverance of the poor captive Son and Brother.

“The next thing to tell you, my dear Thomas, is that, though Mary is better in the main seat of her complaint, she labours under a radical weakness of the bones, that renders her unable to move except in her little chaise, in which she is wheeled about by a man. One of her legs has given way so much that it is an inch shorter than the other, and she is obliged to wear irons on both ; these, with her Collar, are so heavy that she really has no comfort. Mr. Chepher talks of sending us to the Sea in the Autumn, and I hope will dismiss us altogether in the Winter ; as Mary has done growing, her Irons do not want continual alteration. When you see this place you will not wonder that we wish to be released before the winter, even though it should be needful to visit it occasionally afterwards. Tell me when your long vacation commences ; I have room for you here if you can let Henry have a corner of your bed during his Holidays. We expect to see you with great pleasure, but you must not bring a very large package of Books, lest they should not be got into the Mansion. Your studies under the name of Moral Philosophy cannot be objected to ; and as you have spoken only in general terms of your object, I conclude as I hope, that there is nothing objectionable either in the plan you are forming or the end you aim at. I see and feel that the practical morality of the decent and what is esteemed the best part of the world is wretchedly bad, but I feel likewise that it is not for want of a perfect rule, but because all the sanctions which

enforce the rule, and all the strong motives to its observance, are discredited ; and I am not more sure of this than that these sanctions and motives are alone sufficient to produce sound morality. As to any merely speculative scheme which sets aside the Word of God, it can only end where everything of the same root has ended and ought to end, be it more or less finely spun. Should I, my dearest dear Thomas, have the felicity of seeing you, in your matured judgment, devote yourself to the noble employment of leading men, on *truly* philosophical principles, to the consideration and comprehension of the Gospel morality, which is very little understood—an undertaking which would afford sufficient scope for the finest talents—I should think myself a most happy Parent. Pray, my dear Thomas, let me hear from you, and tell us when you come. God bless you, my Son.—Believe me your truly affectionate Mother,

E. QUINCEY.

“I forget whether I told you that your Uncle took out such strong Letters to great Men in India, that he hopes to return soon with his very moderate wishes satisfied.

“THOMAS QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Worcester College, Oxford.”

III.

“HINCKLEY, *June* 5, 1804.

“MY DEAREST HENRY,—I am much obliged to you for your Letter, both for the desire expressed in it to accomplish your Master’s wish and to please me, and for the improvement which is apparent in your whole Letter. But why do you grieve over the business you have to perform? Don’t you know that you must do something, and that if you were obliged to play all day, with a certainty that you would be flogged if you did not get through a certain quantity of play, you would be miserable? And what is worse, if you played thus for seven years you would find yourself only a great ignorant Creature whom nobody would know what to do with. Now at the end of seven years’ school discipline you will possess knowledge, which will be no trouble to carry about, and you will find yourself on a footing with other people; moreover, besides the use of knowledge, it is a pleasure to possess it, which you may be sure of (though perhaps you do not feel it), from never having heard anybody in your whole life wish to exchange their knowledge for ignorance. I don’t know, Henry, whether you will not suspect that I am laughing at you with such grave arguments proving what everybody knows; but I am not laughing, I assure you, but have answered your grave lamentations about your work with the most obvious truths I could think of.

“I am surprised that you did not tell me when your Holidays begin. You must come to Manchester to Mr. Kelsall’s, and I will write to him to set you off in a Coach to Leicester, at which place I will meet you.

“Your Sister Mary is far from being well ; indeed she is better a great deal in the main part of her complaint, but she is very weak and unable to walk at all.

“I forget when I wrote my last Letter to you ; I believe it was in March and from Bath. I went with your Uncle to London at the latter end of that Month, and after waiting there till the middle of April we went to Portsmouth, all the time expecting every day to be our day of separation till the 7th May, when he really did embark in the *Bengal* Indiaman. I stayed at Portsmouth till the 9th, expecting, from very unfavourable Winds, that the Ships would put back, but they did not, and I arrived here on the 11th.

“We made all the inquiries possible at Portsmouth about poor Richard ; we had an interview with the Captain of the Privateer with whom he first sailed. I cannot say we derived any comfort from what we heard. It appears that, notwithstanding this Man and his Brother (with whom Richard is now sailed to the South Sea) have both good Characters, they took advantage of an unfortunate, miserable child, ready to perish in the street, and was ready to sell himself for bread. O Henry ! your Brother’s sufferings have been so great,

and I fear are likely to be so, that they might well deter others from like rebellious conduct! He was famishing with hunger and almost naked when these Men found him.

“I believe, according to the Confession of the Privateer Captain, that they knew Richard had fled from his home and Guardians; therefore, had they been *very upright* Men, they would not have taken him out; so that, considering this, and that one of them commanded a Privateer, we have reason to be thankful that they are not profligate men, and, as the world goes at Portsmouth, are thought honest. Your poor Brother’s voyage will be two years. Think, then, what he may suffer; and when I tell you he is only the Cabin Boy, consider how he must lose everything he had in two years’ cleaning knives and shoes, and every kind of the most menial work. My dear child, we have all a plain, important duty, the only one we can at present perform towards Richard, namely, to pray to God to open his understanding and to touch his heart, that he may see his own real condition and danger, and that he may turn to God with true repentance and prayer. For two years to come no measures can be taken to alter his outward situation.

“Your Sister Jane is grown half a head since you saw her; she will meet you these holidays. Give my respectful comp^{ts} to Mr. and Mrs. Hewitt, and believe me your very affectionate Mother,

“E. QUINCEY.

“ Mary’s love.

“ I have got such a house that I am not sure whether I must not make you a Bed in a great Basket.

“ Your brother Thomas is at Worcester College.

“ In all my tossings about I have had a constant recollection that I have a letter of Mr. Hewitt’s somewhere locked up and not answered ; if that is the case, I fear he thinks me very rude.

“ Your Uncle left his kind love to you.

“ My dearest Child, you may be sure I have suffered very much, and that there is scarce an hour in the day when I do not suffer on Richard’s account. May you have grace early to seek the Lord, and abiding in His fear and love, you will not fall into the snares that have taken your Brother. Watch and pray, or be assured you cannot be safe one moment.

“ Master HENRY QUINCEY,

“ Rev. Mr. Hewitt’s,

“ Lever, near Bolton, Lancashire.”

IV.

[From his sister Mary, then with her cousins—the Gees—at Boston.]

“ BOSTON, *April 19, 1807.*

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have only time before the post goes out to tell you that I have just heard from my Mother, who is at Peterborough, that she hopes Richard is at length arrived, as a number of Whalers are come, or coming, in. You have always

desired me to give you the earliest information on this subject, and therefore I send you this, unsatisfactory as it is. I have written to my Mother, expressing my wish to accompany her to London if she should go to meet him, but I know not if she will consent. I am all impatience till I hear further. How I long to see him! I must not say more, but remain your truly affectionate Sister, M. Q.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Worcester College, Oxford.”

V.

“PETERBOROUGH, *May 9, 1807.*

“MY DEAREST THOMAS,—I have received Letters and Remittances from your Uncle, who desires me to pay you £50 from him, and this I shall be able to do any time after his earliest dated Bill comes to Maturity, which will be on the 20th of this Month. I have put this money business into Mr. Kelsall’s hands, and you may draw on him by the 21st. I will write to prepare him for the appearance of your Dft. or other order about your £50 in time.

“I hope you have escaped the uneasy feelings which I have had and communicated to Mary, during the last three weeks, from the time Richard’s Ship arrived to the end of all our expectations to behold him again at the present time. The scattered, strange intelligence we have collected amounts, I think, only to this, that he is possibly a Midshipman

on board a King's Ship, and gone to South America. The Captain of the *Cambridge* or *Caerwent*, I don't know which, took good care to forward a Letter, written by Richard to Mr. Hall, with a Bill payable to the same Captain, but had the cruelty to suppress another Letter written to me and referred to by Richard to Mr Hall, as a full account of himself and explanatory of his future designs. These Letters were written at the Cape, and, for anything that appears to the contrary, when Richard thought he was coming home in one of the Ships I have mentioned above; the rest of the Story, accounting for his not being forthcoming with these ships, is, that there was a disturbance among the crews at Rio de Janeiro, that Richard made his escape and got on board a Frigate, where he remained concealed till his Ships had sailed, and then entered into a Merchantman, which was taken by an English Ship of War, in which he is said to be a Midshipman. Those who tell this tale must say something, and, I hope, have no inducement to deceive of a more serious kind than to cover what I understand is a common act of knavery among Captains who have made very long voyages, namely, to quarrel with all the Boys on board, and use them so ill as to induce them to run away at some port near home, by which premature retaliation they forfeit all their wages.

“I am commissioned by your Uncle to buy a small estate immediately. Now, to accomplish this affair so as to embrace our numerous requirements is not very easy.

“I shall stay about three weeks longer here, and then pay a short visit at Boston, and return with Mary by the nearest road home.—I ought to say I purpose all this if not prevented by unforeseen events, or diverted from this course by a report of any likely purchase out of it.

“This family are all well, and desire to be remembered to you.—Believe me, my dear Son, evermore yours affectionately,
E. QUINCEY.”

VI.

“PETERBRO’, *May 18, 1807.*

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—When I received your Letter I thought it required no answer, as I conjectured you might have had one from me before you left Oxford announcing the gift of £50 from your Uncle ; of this I am now doubtful on reckoning up the time, and supposing you may wish for the money while you are among the Booksellers, send you the twice-told tale. You may draw on Mr. Kelsall any day after the 20th for the money, as I have prepared him for it.

“I refer you to my Letter for my uneasiness about Richard, whose Captain and ship are safe at home, and my adventurous Boy not forthcoming. I believe this Man is a Rogue, and tells lies by the dozen ; but what are his motives, and what is the real fate of your poor Brother, cannot at present be known. Mr. Gee, who is now in Town, and will do what he can to unravel the mystery, thinks the Captain

has only the small villainy of embezzling some arrears of wages to move his invention of so many wonders. I would employ you to look after the truth of this Captain's Tale, so important to us all, but I do not fancy you so expert at such a business as Mr. Gee.

"I am employed by your Uncle to buy a little Estate, but what steps to take in order to compass this object I no more know than a Child, because to meet our wants, the place to set off in with the inquiry must have several combined charms which are not likely to be found together; and when we have made large abatements and sacrifices of beauty, nobody wants to sell where I would condescend to buy, as far as I have yet heard.

"Whenever I get home I shall be glad to see you, my dear Thomas. If I am not engaged before Midsummer about negotiations and improvements I shall be at Downy Parade, should I have the fortune to get a better place as soon as it is habitable.

"The family are all well, and desire to be remembered to you.—Ever, my dear Son, with unfeigned and great affection, E. QUINCEY.

"I have just copied from the Parish Register the entry of Mary Queen of Scots' interment.

"THOS. QUINCEY, Esq.,

"No. 5 Northumberland Street, Marybone."

VII.

“BOSTON, *June* 13, 1807.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—If I had not so frequently experienced similar delays, I should imagine, from the length of time that has elapsed since I heard from you, that you had forsworn the use of your pen, or that I was so unhappy as to be forbidden the benefit of it.

“A long time since I gave you notice that Richard was expected home. After being perplexed and disappointed by a hundred different and contradictory accounts, given by a hundred different people, we have at last received a copy of a letter written from him on board the *Diomedé* at Portsmouth to Mr. Hall, begging an immediate supply of money for his present use, and at the same time expressing his disgust at the life he had chosen, and a desire, if it were not too late, to resume his studies and endeavour to recover the time he has given to experiment. The letter is well written, and displays a generous independence of mind, which disdains the littleness which might have prompted him to extenuate a conduct which he knew Mr. Hall entirely condemned. His present disgust, however, appears to me to arise from the disappointment of his too sanguine expectations of fame and honours, as well as from the contemptible opinion he has formed of naval men in general, more than from aversion to the life itself. Something to this effect I remarked to my Mother. In reply, she observes that ‘she believes his disgust to be real,’ and remarks that ‘she thought

him at fifteen too young to have a *reasonable* choice, but at nineteen she thinks him too old to be influenced by any one.' From which answer I make these two inferences: that she imagines I intend to use all my influence to engage him to continue the profession, and that it is her *wish* (though she avows her intention of not trying for the smallest weight in his determination) he may give it up. She is mistaken, however, in supposing that I should endeavour to *influence* him in a matter of such importance; but I think it impossible for him to judge whether his present life be more displeasing to him than any other profession which he has not tried, and I believe it highly probable that, after the turbulent activity of a sea life, the sedentary habits of one of the learned professions (for he boldly declares his unaltered aversion to trade) would be altogether dissonant to his feelings. I am certain the ambition that has hitherto incited him to submit to the greatest hardships, in the hope of acquiring the unfading laurel, would never allow him to copy the philosophic indifference with which you survey the smallness of your patrimony; and I confess that to see his name added to the list of those heroes who have increased the glory of their country would afford me a satisfaction I need not blush to acknowledge. It ought also to be remembered that the degrading situation in which he has hitherto been placed is not likely to have displayed the advantages of a naval life in the most seducing colours. I should like to hear your opinion on this subject, and

tell me if you hold any correspondence with my Mother ; for I should have been glad you had received this account from her rather than from me, as it makes me appear in the light of a spy who lies in wait to detect the errors or faults of others, and, still worse, reports them to others.—Your affectionate Sister,

JANE DE QUINCEY."

VIII.

"CLIFTON, *June 24, 1808.*

"MY DEAR THOMAS,—I shall be very glad to see you whenever it suits you to come. Jane and Henry are at home, and I think it will not be long before Richard will be with us, though I do not know this for a certainty.

"I take it for granted that Mary has told you he is in England, and that he is quite tired of the sea, but whether he will leave his Ship or not, at present I can only conjecture. I wish him to come home in order to an arrangement for his future course, being more easily made than by Letter.—I expect Mr. Schultz in a week, for, owing him much civility on your Father's account in a time of great need, I could not defer my hospitalities to a more convenient season ; but as I found him very sick and in need of fresh air, it was so much his time of need that I could not help asking him just now.

"Mary stays a little longer at Boston.—I am, my dear Son, most tenderly your affectionate Mother,

"E. QUINCEY.

“It is quite convenient to me to make room for you. Do not think I should ask anybody to the exclusion of my Children. I have always room for you.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Worcester College, Oxford.”

[Richard, however, they did not see at this time, though he was in England ; the fear he entertained of being delivered up to his guardians was too great to allow him to present himself to them.]

CHAPTER XVI.

RICHARD DISCLOSES HIMSELF TO HIS BROTHERS.

DE QUINCEY in the "Sketches" wrote:—

"With regard to Pink's yearning for England, that had been partially gratified in some part of his long exile: twice, as we learned long afterwards, he had landed in England, but such was his haughty adherence to his purpose, and such his consequent terror of being discovered and reclaimed by his guardians, that he never attempted to communicate with any of his brothers or sisters. There he was wrong; me they should have cut to pieces before I would have betrayed him."

Recalling Pink's accounts of those journeys, sailor-like in frank precision, De Quincey sets down this passage in his sketch:—

"Two circumstances of these journeys he used to mention; both were from the port of London (for he never contemplated London save as a port) to Liverpool; or, thus far I may be wrong, that one of the two might be (in the return order) from Liverpool to London. On the first of these journeys, his route lay through Coventry; on the other, through Oxford and Birmingham. In neither case had he started with much money; and he was going to

have retired from the coach at the place of supping on the first night (this journey then occupying two entire days and two entire nights), when the passengers insisted on paying for him: that was a tribute to his beauty—not yet extinct. He mentioned this part of his adventures somewhat shyly, whilst going over them with a sailor's literal accuracy; though, as a record belonging to what he viewed as childish years, he had ceased to care about it. On the other journey his experience was different, but equally testified to the spirit of kindness that is everywhere abroad. He had no money, on this occasion, that could purchase even a momentary lift by a stage-coach: as a pedestrian he had travelled down to Oxford, occupying two days in the fifty-four or fifty-six miles which then measured the road from London, and sleeping in a farmer's barn, without leave asked. Wearied and depressed in spirits he had reached Oxford, hopeless of any aid, and with a deadly shame at the thought of asking it. But, somewhere in the High Street—and, according to his very accurate sailor's description of that noble street, it must have been about the entrance of All Soul's College—he met a gentleman, a gownsman, who (at the very moment of turning into the College gate) looked at Pink earnestly, and then gave him a guinea, saying at the time, 'I know what it is to be in your situation. You are a schoolboy, and you have run away from your school. Well, I was once in your situation, and I pity you.' The kind gownsman, who wore a velvet cap with a silk gown,

and must therefore have been what in Oxford is called a gentleman-commoner, gave him an address at some College or other (Magdalen he fancied in after years), where he instructed him to call before he quitted Oxford. Had Pink done this, and had he frankly communicated his whole story, very probably he would have received, not assistance merely, but the best advice for guiding his future motions. His reason for not keeping the appointment was simply, that he was nervously shy. . . . Pink held it to be the wisest counsel that he should pursue his route on foot to Liverpool. That guinea, however, he used to say, saved him from despair.

“One circumstance affected me in this part of Pink’s story. I was a student in Oxford at that time. By comparing dates, there was no doubt whatever that I, who held my guardians in abhorrence, and above all things admired my brother for his conduct, might have rescued him at this point of his youthful trials, four years before the fortunate catastrophe of his case, from the calamities which awaited him. This he felt generally to be the most distressing form of human blindness—the case when accident brings two fraternal hearts, yearning for reunion, into almost touching neighbourhood, and then in a moment after, by the difference perhaps of three inches in space, or three seconds in time, will separate them again, unconscious of their brief neighbourhood, perhaps for ever.”

Among De Quincey’s papers we have come on some notes additional concerning “Pink,” in one

of which he specially celebrates his altogether unique self-control and incapacity for being "put out" under any circumstances:—

"Pink," he says, "was the man who, with a sailor's incapacity for being put out in any the most trying circumstances, would have said, on hearing that three continents were destroyed, 'Well, we must lift our anchor and go to the Sou-Sou-West, and rig up a jury-world for the present as best we can.'"

On a third sojourn in England Pink did disclose himself, but at first only partially, and under such mysterious conditions that his mother was fain to imagine he was being personated by another for the purpose of drawing sums of money out of Mr. Kelsall. The whole subject is, on one side, touching; on another it would be almost humorous, but for the grief and suffering it caused to his mother and sisters. In May 1809 he was in London, ill, his constitution completely broken, and being in sore straits, he wrote to Thomas begging his aid, but binding him to secrecy as to his whereabouts. The letters that follow will bring out the leading facts:—

I.

"CLIFTON, *March 10, 1809.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—The circumstance to which Mr. Kelsall alludes is this:—The Lease of the warehouse being nearly expired, and the value of the situation as a warehouse having much decreased, it

has been proposed to convert the premises into a shop. Mr. Thomson, the bookseller, has offered a good rent, if a long lease can be granted him, for without this he would not be at the expense of making the necessary alterations. The Guardians, however, require you and my Mother and myself to give our consent before they will feel at liberty to accede to Mr. Thomson's proposal. It is now some time since Mr. Kelsall begged to have our determination, so it will be necessary to give him an immediate answer. As I could not obtain any satisfactory intelligence on the subject of Dr. Beddoes's library, I got Miss Kempe to question Mr. King, his brother-in-law, about it. He says the books are all packed up ready to be sent to London, where they will be sold. The time and place of sale he could not tell, but says they will be made public in the usual manner.

"We received a letter from Richard about a fortnight since dated 17th February, on board the *Superb*, lying near Gothenborg. He was on parole, but was in daily expectation of hearing his exchange concluded. We now hear from a naval Man that the *Superb* is coming home. If you see her arrival, you could most probably find him out by applying to the Admiralty, where I suppose he must appear after his landing. Is it possible to obtain a sight of Doomsday Book? And could you not by this means discover what lands were held by our family at the time it was written. I have a great desire to be enlightened on this head. I should be glad if you could procure for me a book entitled (I think) 'Memoirs of

the Sidney Family,' and an early edition of the Joan of Arc, containing a something of which I have heard you speak, written by Coleridge. We remove to Westhay in the beginning of May, and if we can dispose of the remainder of the lease we have in this house, we shall remove into Lodgings in Clifton before the 25th of March. I have made you acquainted with our movements that you may use your own convenience in the time of your promised visit. Whenever you come, we cannot choose but rejoice in your company. I think we do not quite understand how to use the Polygraph, and therefore ought not to judge its merit. I have seen a birch wood near Brockley. It is beautiful!—Believe me your affectionate Sister,

M. DE QUINCEY.

“Have you written to Miss Brotherton?¹ She is very impatient to have a prospectus. We have circulated about two dozen prospectuses. Shepperd says there are a great many subscribers.²

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Gt. Tichfield St, Cavendish Square, London.”

II.

“Friday, 19th May 1809.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I received your letter this morning, and cannot express the pleasure I felt in hearing from you after so long a silence. In answer

¹ Miss Brotherton was a cousin of De Quincey's mother.

² This was for Coleridge's *Friend*, which had only recently been announced.

to Mr. Kelsall's letter, I have repeated my former resolution of remaining incog. for some time, whatever inconvenience I may suffer from it. You will undoubtedly be surprised at my perseverance in this point, but I assure you that, however wrong or foolish my motives may be, they are so rooted that nothing can remove them. You have of course learnt how I am situated, and what has been the origin of my misfortunes, but you are not fully acquainted with the extent of my sufferings; for my Body is not alone debilitated to the greatest degree, but I am confident my mental faculties are proportionably injured. Every Feeling is dulled except a sense of pain and sorrow which retain their first strength; and surely in such a situation it is hardly to be wonder'd at if I am subject to strange whims and caprices, which I should myself laugh at were I in health.

“From the peculiar circumstances under which I have been for some years, I feel my credit very closely connected with the success of my undertaking, and as in the present instance my misfortunes have in some measure damp'd professional hopes, perhaps there may be some degree of pride in my refusing to see anybody until prospects brighten; but I cannot suffer pride to interfere with my affection for you, and shall therefore only beg as a favour that our meeting may be deferr'd until I am in a condition to enjoy it more. Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to accept your invitation to Westmoreland, were it not that I propose to myself much more

happiness in deferring it to a future period when I have either recover'd my health, or so far reconciled myself to my fate as to prevent any appearance of Melancholy from damping the happiness of those about me.

“I am at present on a vegetable diet, and pursue every means which Nature points out as tending to eradicate my disorder or repair the injury done to my constitution. If Mr. Kelsall supplies me with money, I shall immediately go down into the neighbourhood of Liverpool, where I may at the same time have the benefit of sea-bathing and country air. I entertain the most sanguine hopes of a perfect recovery, because I believe myself acquainted with the nature of my complaint, and with everything which may tend to destroy it. I should not hesitate a moment in accepting your offers of assistance, were I in any immediate want; but this is not the case, and I believe that should Mr. Kelsall refuse to supply me, I can borrow so much money as will enable me to put my plans in execution; therefore you can only oblige me at present by your correspondence and advice in regard to the purchase of books, for as I intend in my Retirement to dedicate a considerable time to study, I shall take as many Books with me as I can afford. With respect to your proposal of bringing Mary or Jane to town, it will be unnecessary, as my motives would be the same in regard to them as yourself. I wish much to write to my Mother, and will do it, if you see no objection, as soon as I have got everything in proper train.

“ I have been interrupted, and though I have much to say, shall not add anything more at present, as I do not know the post hours. Your letters will be safely received if directed to be left at Wood’s Hotel.—I remain, dear Brother, ever yours affectionately,

RICH. DE QUINCEY.

“ MR. DE QUINCEY,

“ 82 Great Tichfield Street, Oxford Street.”

III.

“ *Tuesday, 23rd.*

“ DEAR BROTHER,—I answer your last night’s letter principally for the purpose of assuring you that in asking your advice on the subject of purchasing books, I meant it in its fullest sense, and shall esteem it as a great favour if you will, at any time when you have leisure, communicate to me your ideas on any interesting subject, rather in the tone of a Monitor and Style of an Essay than that of letter writing, as any formality of Style must considerably relax their Energy ; and I am so far from having contracted any self-sufficiency, that the continual fluctuation of my opinion on diverse subjects convinces me how necessary it is that I should have an adviser who has had opportunity, inclination, and Talents to decide conclusively on important Questions ; and of this number I cannot doubt but you are.

“ What you say of the German Language astonishes me, as I thought their literature had been entirely borrowed from other countries. Fortunately, during

my stay in Denmark I began to learn German, and had resolved to make it my chief Winter study, if my Exchange had not taken place, though with the view of no other advantage than that I might make myself understood without being under the necessity of speaking Danish, for which I conceived a great aversion. I have a Dictionary (but what author is not mentioned, but corrected and enlarged by *Martyni Laguna*), Dialogues by Lloyd, and Schade's Grammar, of which, and the general construction of the language, I am so far Master that I may begin to translate, and shall be much obliged to you for any books which are necessary. There seem in my Grammar to be pretty comprehensive rules for pronunciation, but for fear they should be defective, I will thank you for those you promise me.

"I am exceedingly glad of the news you give me of Henry. Jane, I suppose, has left school. If any plan should strike you as more advisable than another with regard to the mode of making my Mother acquainted with circumstances, pray do not fail to communicate it. I am just going to send a letter to Portsmouth, where I understand there is a parcel of Books sent there by my Mother 2 years ago.—I remain, dear Brother, yours most affectionately,

RICH^d DE QUINCEY.

"THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

"82 Great Tichfield St., Oxford Street."

IV.

“Wednesday, 31st, 9 o’clock.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yours arrived too late for me to answer it by last night’s post. There seems to me something very whimsical in Mr. K.’s ideas of my non-identity. My Mother certainly has a right to entertain doubts from my not writing to her, but these will be removed by my sending her a letter to-day. As to Mr. Kelsall, he has no room for any suspicion, since I offer’d in my correspondence with him to send certificates to prove my Identity. I now enclose these, which you are at liberty to send him if you think it necessary. If you should not receive the money to-day, pray do not let this detain you in town, as rather than this, I would go down to Manchester; but this may be avoided, if you can before you set off supply me with £20, as in the case of remaining any longer in town, I should wish to shift to some part of it where there is a freer circulation of air, and I cannot do this now, because I have not quite sufficient to pay up arrears in my present lodgings.

“It is a great satisfaction to me that my Feelings and actions are intelligible to you, however mysterious and extraordinary they may seem to those who extend their ideas no further than to the common occurrences which come every day within their own observation.

“I received your Friday’s letter on Saturday, but did not answer it, having nothing particular to say.

“Once more I beg you will not delay your departure any longer, as it is quite unnecessary.—I remain, dear Brother, yours most affectionately,

“RICH^d DE QUINCEY.

“I shall call at Wood’s for an answer to-night or to-morrow, and hope to hear that you are gone.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,
“82 Great Tichfield Street.”

V.

“*Thursday Night, 10 o’clock.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have received your letter with the £20 note enclos’d, and I do not think I shall have any difficulty in negotiating it.

“To-morrow I change Lodgings, as several things will detain me in Town at least a week longer. In the first place I must put myself under a Dentist’s hands, as my teeth are most of them decaying, and I have not been able as yet, for want of money, to have more than two taken out. By the bye, can you tell me who is a good Dentist? I have suffered so much from the toothache that I am particular in this point.

“The purchases I shall have to make, particularly in the article of Books, will also help to detain me considerably; but if you can find time, either to-morrow or on Saturday, to make out a list of the most necessary ones, it will save me much time. I shall be much oblig’d to you also for the hints you promise me on the purchase of other articles, for, as

I believe, I am frequently imposed upon for want of a little experience.

“If you will send my Mother’s Letters to-morrow, I will return them on Saturday. I cannot give you any other direction than Wood’s at present, as I do not know the number of my new lodgings, only that they are in Stepney Green ; and this is such an out-of-the-way place, that I am afraid letters may be lost unless exactly directed. I had intended in the event of being detained much longer in town to take lodgings near Kensington, but as this is not the case, I have rather consulted my convenience than inclination in choosing such a place as Stepney Green, because the Man I am to lodge with is well known to me, and may be very serviceable as a correspondent to send me anything I want into the country, so that I wish to oblige him. But I will give you another direction to-morrow or the next day.

“Yesterday I wrote to my Mother, but through neglect my letter did not save post. In my haste, I believe I forgot to send any address, so that her answer will no doubt come through you. What is the reason Coleridge has not published his ‘Friend’ according to promise? I will thank you for the pamphlet you mention,¹ as well as to give me the names of your own publications. It is of no consequence whether you send the certificates or no, provided they are not lost. As soon as I am a little

¹ No doubt Wordsworth’s “Convention of Cintra” pamphlet, which had just appeared with De Quincey’s appendix (see Wordsworth’s “Prose Works,” vol. i. p. 36).

settled I will send you an account of my voyages as you desire. Unfortunately my journals, together with all my cloaths, were *stolen* by a *Midshipman* in whose care they were placed during my imprisonment, and this rascal having gone into another Ship, I shall probably not get them again.—I remain, dear Brother, yours most affectionately,

RICH^d DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Gt. Tichfield St., Oxford St.”

VI.

“*Sunday Night, 12 o'clock.*”

“DEAR BROTHER,—I have perused the letters sent to you by my Mother, and though her own fears have much exaggerated the different circumstances which give colour to the probability of a deception being carried on, yet on the whole there seems to have been some ground for having entertained suspicions. In fact, I see clearly from her statement that this Rogers is a great villain, and actually has had a design to substitute somebody in my room, provided fortune had favoured him by sending me to my long home, which was not altogether an unlikely thing in a South Sea voyage. I never exchanged two words with the Man in my life until June 1805, after my return from South America, when I called upon him, having accidentally heard that he had my Mother’s address; nor does he know anything more about me or my circumstances than my Mother has herself told him.

The Rogers I mentioned in one of my letters to her was the wife of a Lieutenant who lived in Portsmouth, and no relation whatever to the other. However, there is now no occasion for inquiry into the circumstances, as my Mother's doubts, if not removed by my letters, will be most effectually so by Mr. Kelsall's of to-night.

“When you receive this, you will of course have seen Mr. K. I found him yesterday at Wood's, and tho' vex'd at first that he should have forced himself upon me without any previous notice, yet seeing the great reason my Mother had given him to suspect a deception, I cannot blame him, and am glad on the whole it has happened, since it has clear'd away all doubts. He wish'd me to see you, and as he express'd great Friendship, and I am persuaded interests himself much in my welfare, that I might not appear uncivil, I promised to use a little consideration on the subject, though I could without much of this have told him how much more pain than pleasure I should feel in meeting only for a few hours, and then parting again, which must be the case unless I chang'd the whole of my plan, and this I could not do unless some supernatural power should change *me*. Besides this, my Mother would not fail to think it strange that I should see you, and put her out of the question as having no share in my affection; and I have a stronger reason for not seeing her than any I have yet mentioned, but I will defer speaking of this till another time.

“Mr. K., as a point of delicacy wished me to consult

you before I made a Determination of leaving my property in his hands, but this is so far the most eligible plan, were it only to save myself trouble, that I cannot hesitate a moment.

“I sat down to write with as many things in my head as would fill 2 sheets, but have forgot most of them. I need not say that I have no occasion now to borrow from you, and nothing remains but for me to return thanks, which I would wish at all times to be mutually set aside as a useless ceremony, since I can answer for myself that the pleasure of being able to oblige you or any of my Brothers and Sisters will be a sufficient compensation in itself without thanks. To-morrow I shall most likely recollect some of the things I intended to have said, but I am too stupid now, and shall conclude.—I remain, dear Brother, yours most affectionately, RICH^d DE QUINCEY.

“By the Bye, don’t mention to my mother that I have any other reasons for not seeing her than those already mention’d. You will see the propriety of this when I write again.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Gt. Tichfield Street, Oxford Street.”

VII.

“CLIFTON, *May 28, 1809.*

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—From a very slight hint of Mrs. Kelsall’s I drew a certain conclusion that I had some miserable concern in Mr. K.’s London

journey, and having extorted from her all she perhaps had to tell, I must trouble you with a Letter, however unlikely it is for me at this distance to penetrate secrets and concealments which you and others have found impenetrable. If, however, you are still in the dark, and I can furnish a single clue, it may be the right one; and while I am writing and following trains of recollections back to Richard's early career, it is better to me than sitting still, though they lead to nothing.

“Two things present themselves upon the face of Mr. Kelsall's yesterday's Letter: one, that the Person now in London whom you and Mr. Kelsall have been trying to see is not Richard; and the other, that if Richard, he has fallen under some dreadful Power which has quite changed and alienated his mind. Between these two there will be a great difference if the cheat is a new one, and tried at a push to get possession of your Brother's fortune; but if not, and all the Letters I have had since June 1807 are forgeries, then the fate of your poor Brother is sealed up in darkness and fear, whichever of these things are true; but we must leave nothing undone to bring it to light, and I will now write down all I know and think of, by any means possible to bear on the subject.

“Your Uncle and I sought him diligently at Portsmouth and Gosport for a long time in vain, and at last a Prussian sailor, one Zwall, then living (and the owner of a Ferry Boat) on the Gosport side, led us to a Captain with whom Richard sailed at

first, and from him we had a story which was no other use but telling that Richard was gone to the South Seas, and eventually bringing us to know Rogers, who lives in Bell Alley, near the Bank and Colman Street; and this is the Man, in my mind, who really knows from the beginning the whole, and now knows and will know it to the end. He called upon me, and under a profession of great kindness to your Brother, gathered up in a quarter-of-an-hour all he could wish to know about him to serve *any* end. I had then a feeling about the Man which I put away as a disgrace to me who felt it, and an injury to Rogers, which obliged me to be the more abundantly civil.

“I called upon him in Town, and had this feeling so much stronger, that I rejoiced out of measure when I got out of his House into the Street. In his visit he told me that he heard, from being a small and delicate Boy, Richard was grown a tall, fine young Man; that there went with him a young Adventurer like Richard, and under much the same circumstances; that they were friends, of course. He spoke, however, wholly of Richard's conduct as good, and of an interest in him of extraordinary feeling. Now, partly, I think, from Rogers, and partly from a Lawyer in this place, I know there was a disturbance in one of the Ships (for there were two went together belonging to Lord Camelford, and now to Lord Grenville). I believe it amounted to a mutiny, and Richard was said to have changed his Ship; and afterwards a Lawyer called upon me to

know where Richard was, as he would be a very needful Witness respecting the Mutiny.

“ Besides this Mutiny, in which your real Brother possibly lost his life, he is said afterwards to have gone through wonderful distresses; that he was lost, and taken by a French Ship, retaken by an English one and carried to South America, and there was received on board the *Diomedé* as a Midshipman. All this happened before I had any Letter, and it strikes me with horror that at some period of his eventful voyagings, or before he went at all to the South Seas, his companion might assume the name and character of my Son. Yet if this be so, Rogers knows it all, because he has seen Richard since his return, and when he offered to enter for the South Seas, and could not fail to know whether he were the very Boy he had seen so much of four years before.

“ During the whole of my correspondence with your Brother, which has been the most friendly and even tender, there is nothing but what would assure any Person that Richard would fly to my House, to the Arms of his Family, the moment he could; and yet the story says he is sick and in want in London, and will not see even his Brother. This is a Mystery of Iniquity which covers a long lamentable series of evils. Could you see this Man you would indeed know whether he is your Brother, but could Colonel Cohorn see him he must know whether he is the Person calling himself so at Wybourg. If any cheat can be discovered so far back as before the Danish

capture, then the Captains of the South-Sea Ships should be sought for—and perhaps the immediate danger to be guarded against is, that a pretended death may be set up, and a forged Will, to cheat your poor Brother, left possibly in some wretched situation, of his fortune. I hope and conclude the Guardians will not pay any part unless Richard is identified on better authority than Mr. Rogers's.

“The name of one of the South-Sea Whalers is the *Cambridge*, and one of the Captains, Thomson; the other I forget. It appears from the Letters I have received that at one time Richard was in London a Week, at another that he was quite disengaged from every Ship; yet, though it struck me at the time as odd, no suspicion arose at his never coming, had it been but for one day. Now many things which were odd then are perfectly natural on the shocking supposition of his having good reason for not being seen. If a cheat at all, it might begin at the earliest as well as at the latest Period.

“I have this moment a Letter from Manchester, from which it seems that you think the Stranger your Brother.

“Mr Gray, at the Cornish Arms, Point Street, Portsmouth, and Rogers are the only Men ever named to me by the Writer of all my Letters. I sincerely hope Rogers is better than my feelings of him, for if not, the Plot is very deeply laid. I have nothing to add to this but to beg for a Letter Directly. God bless you, my dear Thomas.—Ever your affectionate Mother,

E. QUINCEY.

“ We all think you should not leave Town till this affair is ascertained. I really believe there is some deception, which it is highly important to trace if possible.

“ THOS. QUINCEY, Esq.,

“ 82 Great Tichfield Street, Cavendish Square, London.”

VIII.

“ CLIFTON, *May 29, 1809.*

“ MY DEAR THOMAS,—I am extremely anxious to give you at least so much of our strong impression that the Man you are corresponding with in his concealment is probably not your Brother as to quicken your attention to the means and importance of making the discovery ; or that, if he is your Brother, it is probable he is acting under the control of some irresistible Power, and every day you forbear to press him to appear you are giving time and advantage to some invisible agent for the perfecting a villainous scheme. Yet if such a conspiracy is on foot, it will be no easy thing to defeat ; but I should judge the quickest and strongest measures advisable in dealing with Men of such a sort ; though, if your Brother were but once identified as a free Man, you could hardly use too much patience and delicacy towards him. A thousand things come now to my recollection which gave me no absolute alarm while I believed my very son Richard safe and in an excellent mind, but on the supposition of foul play, all that has passed and looked strangely, though not alarmingly, at the time,

for the reason I have given, might naturally have been expected in the proceedings of wicked Men.

“I shall wait till to-morrow’s Post in hopes of hearing from you before I seal this, but I shall go on with such observations as occur to me in a state of uneasiness not very favourable to the production of the best advice, and if I were on the spot with all the circumstances before me, I would not wish to *direct* any measures with my feelings and fears so much raised as they are. It occurs to me that you may never have heard of Rogers before you had my Letter; however, as I told you before, and now tell you again, that my belief is that this Rogers, be the actions of the concealed Person free or overruled, good or bad, is a Party. It is right to tell you briefly why I think so, as I do not remember how much I said in my last.

“At Portsmouth the Prussian, Zwall, told us there had been much talk of the Captain and this agent taking such a boy as Richard; and when Rogers called on me after he heard that there had been enquiries at Portsmouth and in London by Mr. Gee, he came with a prepared apology for the act, which is a heinous breach of the Law, and subject to a severe punishment. He said he had repeatedly refused Richard, and only complied with his request because the Boy declared he would enter at another Port; but, on his own confession, he had got Richard’s secret fully out of him, and the knowing who and what he was constituted the very essence of the civil offence. At the last, when he had acquainted himself

with all it imported him to know, namely, that no suspicion of treachery existed among us, and what the value of any scheme formed upon Richard's fortune might prove, he described Richard's Person as so altered that we should not know him, and indeed it was a pretty accurately drawn Picture of a tall young Man whom he brought with him and called his Nephew. He also said there was another young Adventurer, a gentleman and very like Richard, went with him to the South Seas (another Nephew, we think). Now, it is remarkable that the account of Richard's altered person came to Rogers in a Letter; a very unlikely piece of intelligence to have a place in a Captain's Letter from the South Seas to the Ship's Agent in London! He went away so triumphantly satisfied with himself and us, that at the Door he turned about and said, 'Madam, I only live or wish to do good in the World,' a speech which touched me like a Torpedo, and made me feel that I had been talking with a Hypocrite, a feeling which I put away, hoping he might be only a vain Man delighted to find himself covered with so many thanks as we gave him for his *own* report of favour to poor Richard, instead of reproaches for his criminal reception of him which he expected. I could, in short, make out a consistent tale of iniquity, either commencing its operation with Richard's first falling into the hands of Rogers at Portsmouth six years ago, or at any subsequent period down to the last Month of March, wherein all the singular words and actions in my recollection would appear, each in their place,

necessary to the final execution of a most black scheme of destruction, and to have been done and said, for any other scheme, at considerable expense, to no conceivable end.

“I would ask, my dear Thomas, whether you have heard any reason for Richard’s hiding himself, if really Richard, half so strong as the reason must be if he is a Pretender. All my Letters purporting to be from Richard express affection, and confidence in my affection, which would naturally bring him home; yet this Person describes himself as having been since March in sickness and want. Colonel Cohorn wrote to me that Richard, in Denmark, at a time when he was suffering want, ‘would rather receive a letter from his dear Mother than money for his relief.’ Have you enquired at the Admiralty where Richard is? Have you, as you may truly do, told Richard the doubts which his extraordinary conduct raises of his Identity?—to which you may add the distress of his Mother and Sisters in colours which you need not fear painting warmly; for I assure you, beside the real and present trouble, I am afraid, much afraid, for the consequences of such a devouring anxiety upon Mary’s indisposed frame of body.

“When Mr. Gee called at Rogers’s he could not help overhearing, as he waited in one room, a violent dispute in the next, in which Rogers was charged with some bad action, and appeared to make a very poor defence. By my Letters it seems Richard was at one time, about a year ago, a whole week in London, and saw Rogers frequently at least, if

he were not living with him, so that a connection subsisted. All this time Richard never talked of coming home. Supposing our real Richard, however, to have been the prisoner in Denmark, and to have held some correspondence with Rogers, and that Rogers, if a villain, did nothing a year ago, is it not obvious that a year ago was too early for anything to be done but to court the unsuspecting confidence of Richard, so that when he came again he might be sure of him. He actually arrives in March, one Month before his coming of age, and then he falls into the Toils. This is what would have happened on this or any other scheme of evil. The correspondence which he carried on with me before, writing to me often twice a week, has entirely ceased. I had my last Letter dated 13th February, Gottenburgh, and have lately been so impatient that I wrote about five or six days ago, before I heard of this sad affair, to beg for an answer immediately. This letter, of course, went to the Admiralty.

“A Greek Testament with a Latin translation—‘Zenophon de Institucione Cyri,’ with a Latin translation—and a Greek Lexicon—these Books pray get for Henry and send immediately. Henry begs the Lexicon may be a very good one and a clear character.

“I have only to add, do not let any pre-assurance of this Stranger being your Brother shut up your ear to my intelligence, which goes only to point out the very highest probabilities of something very wrong

going forward.—Dear Thomas, believe me yours affectionately,
E. QUINCEY.

“Col. Cohorn lives at No. 31 Norton Street, Oxford St. I intended writing to him, but if you waited on him, this letter will introduce you. I have not time for a Letter to him by this Post.

“THOS. QUINCEY, Esq.,

“82 Great Tichfield St., Cavendish Square, London.”

IX.

“CLIFTON, *May* 31, 1809.

“MY DEAR THOMAS,—Your Letter came after mine was sealed and at its last moment, and though I do not think you have much changed the face of the thing, the simplicity of the Letter makes against the Pretender being a Bungler, I own; and if really the production of our own Richard, this simplicity is a grace of inestimable value. I do not find out by any Letter whether Col. Cohorn has seen the person calling himself Richard in London,—this I want to know.—It is said Richard is going to Liverpool, 200 miles from home, to bathe, when we have a convenient bathing-place about 12 miles from Wrington, and surely, all other advantages supposed to be equal, the nearness of Weston to home should turn the choice in its favour to a poor Invalid whose family are all dying to see him, and who has not seen them these 6 years.

“I must pass over the reason for hiding in this

manner, because I have not heard it, but you give no great weight to it, and I do not think it can have any, opposed to such and so many reasons as exist for showing himself, exclusive of the great uneasiness inflicted upon his Friends.—I want to know in what way he has left the Navy. We are constantly asked questions by our Friends about Richard, having interested every soul we could move to get his exchange; and as long as we knew nothing, it was easy to answer, but while I have been writing there is Mr. Burroughs asking your sister Mary when she heard of Richard. It is certainly very important to know whether he is staying at home on leave or on trespass—if for his sickness, leave might be obtained perhaps. Indeed we are reduced to the fruitless toil of endless guessings, which we know the folly of without the power of being wiser. These last words are scarcely worth adding, but the crisis seems to us so near, that nothing is indifferent.—Yours, my dear Thomas, most truly affectionately,

E. QUINCEY.

“I enclose a letter to Richard, which you may send or burn as you see best.”

[As will appear in future letters, Richard de Quincey was able to produce such satisfactory proofs of his identity that very soon, when he felt the proper time had come, his mother's fears and suspicions had to give place to the conviction that follows the production of full evidence. It illustrates her character, however, that she was not to be led into any kind of

admission on the reports or opinions of others, and remained unmoved from her first position till such documentary evidence was forthcoming—a certain caution and carefulness only to be found in women of great reserve and prudence.]

X.

“CLIFTON, *June 9, 1809.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—As all hope of your seeing Richard seems to be now at an end, since he tells us he leaves London on the 8th or 9th, we hope you will come down to us directly. I am sorry he still continues his intention of visiting Liverpool, because I am persuaded he will apply to some Quack Doctor. It was not till we received his letter of yesterday that I resigned all expectation of seeing him—strange and cruel boy! Mr. Kelsall’s letters, which explain nothing, only render darkness more dark.

“We long to hear your account. A letter for you arrived here yesterday from Keswick. I have not forwarded it, because I think it possible you may now be on the road. We remove to Westhay in about ten days. I hope you will arrive here long before that time, as you can direct what you would have done with the two packages of books you have here. We have let the house to some friends of ours, under whose care they may be safely left, if you do not wish to have them removed to Westhay. Have you ever seen Colonel and Mrs. Cohorn? If you have not, could you not call, for they have been

very kind to Richard? I hope you have heard from somebody some account of his person; we cannot procure an answer to any question we ask. Is he tall or short? Has his face any resemblance to his former self? He said in his letter that Rogers had some intention of substituting another person for himself, in case of his death, so that our suspicions were not without foundation. I sent the note to Miss Fricker the morning after I received it.—Believe me, my dear Brother, your affectionate Sister,

M. DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY,

“82 Gt. Tichfield St., Cavendish Square, London.”

XI.

“BROCKLEY, *Nov.* 27, 1809.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—As you are about buying me some Greek Books, you can perhaps procure me a Septuagint, which I can't get in Bristol under a very high price. Mr. Boak has bought Baylis a very nice Greek Testament, a Clarendon edition, the same as you said you would get for me. It is a large octavo, printed on very fine paper, and the print is admirable. I shall be much obliged to you to send the books as soon as you can. I have finished Horace, and am at present reading Cicero's Offices; after that I am to begin Livy.

“Richard waited some time in expectation of receiving a letter from Captain Walton; but as none came, he was obliged to go; so on Saturday 25th he

set off, at one o'clock at noon, and was to arrive at Plymouth at ten next morning. Unfortunately, however, the very day that he went, there came a letter from Plymouth Dock, the contents of which I am ignorant of as yet. But he intends, if he finds when he arrives there that his attendance is not necessary, to return immediately; so I am in great hopes that he will.

“Richard has left his horse with Mr. Boak on trial, who is so much delighted with him, that he is determined to buy him for the sum agreed upon, viz., £50. In this business, I think that both Richard and Mr. B. will be losers; the former for selling it 10 guineas under the price he gave for it, when if he had kept it till next year he might have sold it for 70 guineas, as the Veterinary Surgeon told him; and the latter for buying it at all, as he will most certainly break him down.

“My Mother has been told by Knowles that the house will cost £450 more than he agreed for, which so dismayed her that she at first declared she would let it immediately. I believe, however, that she has borrowed £100 of Richard and £100 of some one else so as to raise the money. All at Westhay desire their love.—Believe me your affectionate Brother,

H. DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Grasmere, near Ambleside, Westmoreland.”

CHAPTER XVII.

MARY DE QUINCEY'S LETTERS FROM CLIFTON.

DE QUINCEY has himself told of his mother's mania for building. She had been concerned in erecting or in remodelling no fewer than five houses, respecting each of which he gives some details; and not only had she a passion for building, but tact in naming what she had built. The name Greenhay or Greenheys was due to her, and is likely long to have its place in the topography of England; for it adheres to the district of Manchester, in which the house of Greenhay stood central. De Quincey, in a note to his chapter titled "Laxton" in the "Autobiographic Sketches," says:—

"As this name might, under a false interpretation, seem absurd, as including incongruous elements, I ought, in justification of my mother, who devised the name, to have mentioned that *hay* was meant for the old English word (derived from the old French word *haie*, indicating a rural enclosure). Conventionally, a *hay* or *haie* was understood to mean a country-house within a verdant ring-fence, narrower than a park, which word park, in Scotch use, means any enclosure whatever, though not twelve feet square; but in English use (witness Captain Burt's

wager about Culloden Parks) means an enclosure measured by square miles, and usually accounted to want its appropriate furniture, unless tenanted by deer."

It necessarily followed that, during the progress of these various works, temporary abodes had to be found elsewhere, which was the case between the removal from The Priory and the erection or remodeling of Westhay, near Wrington. This residence, however, was built at Colonel Penson's expense, and with the idea of its forming a suitable joint-domicile for Colonel Penson, on his retirement from service in India, and for Mrs. de Quincey and her daughters. Of that we shall hear again; meanwhile during the preparation of Westhay, the mother and daughters were at Clifton, and from the letters written from there which have been preserved, we give the following:—

I.

“CLIFTON, *Oct.* 9, 1808.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—We learn from Mr. Kelsall that he has seen you lately in Liverpool. On the strength of your long and faithful attachment to the fair cottagers at Everton, I shall venture to direct a letter to your old lodgings. We returned to this place about three weeks since, and were not a little disappointed that you had never fulfilled your engagement to visit us at Sidmouth. Miss Brotherton went to London last week, and I gave her a note

for you, supposing you might be there. She was anxious to hear tidings of her *Bible*. Three months ago you wrote word you had given orders for the binding of one you had chosen. What is become of it? and where must it be inquired for? I tremble to think of the extremities to which her despair may reduce her when she finds you are not in town, and has no chance of being consoled by a sight of this child of her affections before it is sent to Clifton. She has before this time arrived in Lincolnshire, but I shall not venture to write to her till you have given me information on this subject. Relieve me from the necessity of making this the perpetual burden, the beginning and end of all my letters, and yourself from the more dreadful one, of reading what affords so little entertainment.

“I am afraid you never executed a commission I gave you to buy me some books. It is impossible to say how acceptable *any* would be, if you have. The state of more than Gothic darkness in which I have lived since I saw you is really wonderful. We see no books, and the very few people we know here are as ignorant as ourselves of all that is going on in the world of literature, at least of that part of it which excites my curiosity. Wordsworth's Poems, of which I become more passionately fond every day, have been my refuge and comfort amidst the disgust which these things occasion me. A few years here will wear out these inward pleasures, and I shall become, like most of the world, a block of stupid matter. I will shut my eyes against such a horrible

future. I am seized with a violent desire to learn Spanish, and want you to mention a good Grammar, and an easy book to read in that language. I would also request you to send me an account of your life and adventures during the last year, and of your plans for the future. When shall we see you? Our Cottage is in a state of forwardness, and I hope we shall leave this place in the spring. Henry has left that cream and flower and scum of wisdom and learning, Mr. Keith, and is now with Mr. Boak of Brockley. Joseph Pratt has just entered the Church. He desires you will decide a dispute that has long subsisted between him and me respecting the number of bulls that once attacked you on your road to Pile, Joseph Tucker being with you. Were there six or seven? My Mother and Jane desire their love, and so does your affectionate Sister, M. DE QUINCEY."

II.

"CLIFTON, Dec. 13, 1808.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I wrote a long letter to you yesterday, which I burnt because I recollected I was in a very stupid humour, and I fear this will arrive too late to find you in Oxford, at least if you retain your former intention of going to London, which I hope you do. Remember the many pieces of good advice which I gave you before you left Clifton, and *observe* you are not to bring me anything as a present or *douceur*, and fear not to be

received in the most gracious manner by my imperial highness without. I engaged a music master yesterday at a guinea and a half a month (or per month if you will), not without much opposition from the higher powers. You tell me you like to hear news, but, alas! my life is a blank, and one day is the same as a thousand. I could, indeed, tell you that Miss Adair still continues to walk with Captain Snow, to the no small scandal of the good people in Clifton; that Miss Monck looks as blooming as usual, &c., &c.; but this and much more equally interesting intelligence shall enlighten your hours here. We have this moment heard the great news from the Continent. Farewell, my dear Brother.—Yours affectionately,

“M. DE QUINCEY.

“Remember to bring home all your linen.

“THOMAS DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“Worcester College, Oxford.”

III.

“CLIFTON, *Feby.* 14, 1809.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—Mr. Kelsall writes word that the lease of the Warehouse in Manchester being to expire next midsummer, and the value of that situation having much decreased, it is thought advisable to let it as a shop or shops; and Mr. Thompson, the bookseller, has offered a good rent, if they will grant him a long lease, without which

it would not answer him to make the necessary alterations. The Guardians, however, require my Mother, you, and myself to give our consent before they can feel themselves at all at liberty to grant one beyond the time of Henry coming of age. My Mother desired me to make this statement to you, and to request you would signify your pleasure either to us or Mr. Kelsall.

“You have rejoiced us all very much by assuring us Mr. Coleridge’s work¹ is not given up. I hope all the printers are not such rascals as Mr. Savage. The prospectuses were not arrived on Saturday; to-morrow we shall send again. Here I must observe that I don’t like Mr. Shepperd (the bookseller to whom you directed me for Mr. Coleridge’s prospectus). I went in one day to ask if they were come. He told me they were not. I suppose I looked disappointed. ‘Do you think they will come before the end of the week?’ said I. ‘It is possible,’ he reply’d; ‘but I am afraid it is only one of Mr. Coleridge’s eccentricities,’ and a malicious sneer rose on his countenance as he spoke, which as suddenly changed into a look of servile assent when I hastily demanded what he meant, and observed that none of Mr. C.’s *friends* had any such idea. Since that time, he tells, with affected pleasure, of the astonishing number of persons who are anxious to offer their subscriptions; but I cannot divest myself of the first impression he made upon me, and I regard him only as a cunning hypocrite.

¹ *The Friend*.

“Pray execute your intention of writing to Miss Brotherton. She has been long impatiently waiting for a prospectus, which I promised to send her as soon as I could get one. She will receive it with double pleasure from your hands, and if you would exalt yourself to the rank of a Demi-God in her mind, send her also a copy of the Pamphlet you promise us.

“All that you can say of a reviving nature in Spanish affairs is quite necessary to preserve me from the contagious influence of the heartless creatures who run about with eager assiduity to circulate every petty disaster, every symptom of abating ardor in Spain. As long as a single man, however, shall maintain the cause of freedom, I will still hope. The day of vengeance will yet come upon the destroyer, and who can say from whence it may first come! What do you think of the Duke of York's affair? I have no doubt but that he is quite capable of any action, how wicked or dishonorable soever, for what can be expected of a man who has neither principle nor sense? Yet I fear the testimony of such witnesses as are brought against him will not obtain the credit they may deserve. It ought, however, to be remembered that none but such degraded characters are likely to be able to prove such transactions, for no others would engage in them.¹

¹ Frederick (Duke of York). “He had become entangled with a handsome adventuress, Mary Anne Clarke, who made money out of her intimacy with the Commander-in-Chief by promising promotion to officers who paid her for her recommendations. This matter was raised in the House of Commons by Colonel Wardle on 27th January 1809, and

“We could not help laughing when we observed the truth of your remark as to all the rooms at West-hay being 12 ft. by something, for we had never remarked the circumstance before. We knew, indeed, that the two largest rooms were twelve feet wide. Everybody disapproves the disproportionate length of the drawing-room, and I myself pleaded for the addition of two feet to the breadth, but this would have added so much to the expense, which is already greater than we can well afford, that it was given up, and we chose rather to hazard the present shape than curtail the length, and, besides our partiality for a long room, it makes the division of the upper rooms much more convenient. The criticisms with which we are favored on the plan of our house are almost as amusing as those you mention on Mr. Coleridge’s paper. The outline which you admire is generally condemned. This we expected, but we only regret that the great expense of irregularity in building obliged us to restrain our wild fancies so much. The back, which is one of the prettiest sides, will unfortunately be the least seen.” [Here follow sketch and description of curtains.]

“My Mother desires me to say she shall be very glad to see you, as soon as you can come; therefore if you make no alteration in your plans, I suppose we

referred to a select committee, which took evidence on oath. The inquiries of this committee proved that York had shown most reprehensible carelessness in his dealings with Mrs. Clarke, but he could not be convicted of receiving money himself, and the House of Commons acquitted him of any corrupt practices by 278 votes to 196.”—*Dict. of Nat. Biography.*

may expect you in ten days or a fortnight. I am perfectly aware of the truth of your observations on Birch trees. We have a great many planted, but as we were obliged to leave the disposal of them to gardeners, they are most likely placed to the very worst advantage. And indeed there is so little inequality of ground in our small domain of only five acres, that they would never produce the fine effect you mention in your mountain scenery.

“Henry has many questions to ask you about Colleges, and their various merits, and impatiently expects your arrival. He has just recovered from a typhus fever. My Mother and Jane unite with me in best Compliments to Mr. Coleridge, and believe me your affectionate Sister,
M. DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY, Esq.,

“R. Southey, Esq.,

“Greta Hall, near Keswick, Westmoreland.”

IV.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I believe Mary has answered all your enquiries to me, but she desires me to add that her windows are pronounced by all the family to be absolutely unintelligible. Had she thought of it sooner, she would have drawn them in colours; but I must observe that in these things you should always consult the size, shape, aspect, &c., of your room;—if you are really going to build or furnish a

cottage, I recommend you to leave it to us, as I flatter myself we could make it look very well at the smallest possible expense. But ought not that beautiful and wild-hearted girl to be consulted? She certainly must have taste, and is the best judge of what will please herself. If I ever marry (which Heaven forbid!) I shall at least request that no one but myself may choose the curtains and plant the birches. I dare say you philosophers have no idea of the certain ruin attending on these things. I should like to know what you would expect to build a house and furnish it for.

“You deserve to be sainted for sending me so long a letter. I was just engaged in railing at your delays when it arrived. I sent for the *Cid*, but have not got it yet.—You say ten days, and so we think we may reasonably hope to see you in as many weeks—pray disappoint us for once—it is a year and a half since I saw you. I wish you would bring a few thousand of your books with you.—How many more dozen works are we to expect from Southey? Has he not greatly sinned in your eyes in this respect? I hope you will not leave this letter about and let him see this sentence, or he will detest me when I come to see you and Mrs. de Quincey at Keswick. But you will not choose this lake, I hope; I am sure I should like Grasmere better. There is nothing, hardly, in the world that I should like so much as to spend a summer in *Westmoreland*.

“We shall hear of Dr. Beddoes's books, but I hope

you mean to be here yourself to execute C.'s commission. I am afraid this argues no good.

"I could not even make out the name of the German book you wished to have sent.—I am glad you do not despair of the Spaniards;—it is mournful to hear the good people here, who have delivered us, as well as Spain, to certain destruction. We have not been able to get the *Times*, though I have a great curiosity to study your logic. Adieu.—Your most affectionate Sister,
JANE DE QUINCEY."

V.

"CLIFTON, April 13, 1809.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have reason to be piqued, in my turn, that you should so sin against my taste as to imagine me insensible to the beauty of your description of the fire. Such treason deserves no small atonement. Mercy being, however, the predominant feature of my character, I shall recall the imprecations which in the first moments of my indignation I pronounced against you, if within a fortnight you appear before me and obliterate the remembrance of your crime by singing my praises in verses that shall render my name immortal. Why I had not the grace to thank you for it I really do not know. I suppose, feeling that I did so in my heart, I forgot that it was necessary to embody my thoughts before they could become present to your mind.

"Your barber amuses me much, and almost tempts

me to wish for a beard, that I might have an opportunity of contemplating the strange animal.—You must give me a more minute description of your Cottage, when you come; at present I can't reconcile myself to the sitting-room being upstairs. I intended to have stepped from the window on to the grass without let or hindrance of stairs or doors, and then I should have wished you to have been the sole author of its glory. Wordsworth has already consecrated it. However, I don't mean to quarrel with it, and I dare say if I were to see it, I should prefer it to the visions of my imagination.

“I can give you no information about the *Superb*. We are much surprised at receiving no account of or from Richard. By applying at the Transport Office, you might, I suppose, hear his destination. His last letter was dated on board the *Superb*, and he said he was in hourly expectation of hearing that his exchange had been concluded.

“If the Bible be finished, pray order it to be sent down to Clifton by the first conveyance. I cannot afford to give you any commissions. My Mother, with her love, says she shall be very glad to see you as soon as you can come; we do not think of leaving this house till about the middle of May, and then you could go to Westhay with us.

“*Teazles* are not animals, as you seem to imagine, but a plant which is used to comb wool. They are cultivated in our neighbourhood and sent to all parts of the Kingdom, and in good years are, as the farmers say, a very profitable concern. So J. Pratt

and I always console ourselves when we happen to be particularly poor by saying we will grow teazles. If you should meet with any Spanish books *very* cheap, you may purchase them for me. Lansdown has a few, but I think they are dear.—Believe me your affectionate Sister,

M. DE QUINCEY.

“My Mother has already most of Doddridge’s works, and therefore declines the set you mention. I have, for lack of another, been writing with a pen that has every bad quality that a pen can possess.

“If your pamphlet is out, you might send one with the Bible.”

VI.

“June 24, 1809.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have but a few minutes to tell you that this day (Saturday) we leave this place entirely, so you must come to Westhay. I assure you I am much disappointed that I have not the honour of introducing you myself to our Valley, for I have remained here some days after my Mother and Jane left Clifton, principally for that purpose. There is a carrier from the Queen’s Head in Ratcliffe St. every day to Wrington, by which you could send your trunk, if you choose to walk; and there is a coach also, which, I *conclude*, leaves Bristol every day for the West, and which comes within two miles of us. You ought to get out at the top of Red hill and turn down the Wrington Lane. Am I at all intelli-

gible? If you can pick out any music which you *know* to be beautiful, you may buy me some.—Ever your affectionate Sister,

M. DE QUINCEY.

“THOS. DE QUINCEY,

“82 Gt. Tichfield St., Cavendish Square, London.”

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